

SWORD & SORCERY

# Ravenloft

## SECRETS OF THE DREAD REALMS



A Ravenloft Campaign Setting Supplement



# Ravenloft®

## SECRETS OF THE DREAD REALMS

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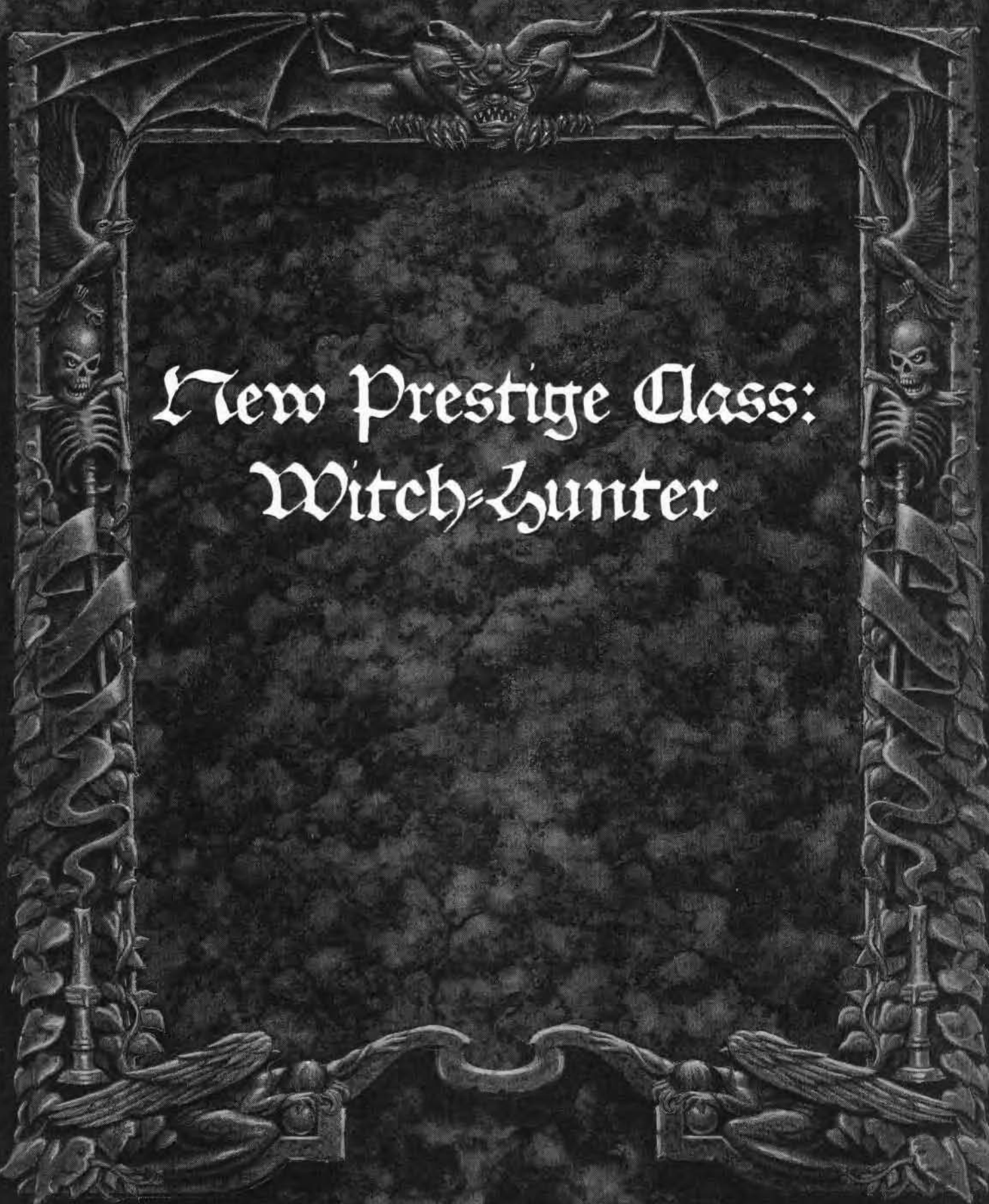


# Ravenloft®

## SECRETS OF THE DREAD REALMS

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New Prestige Class:  
Witch-Hunter



he oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.

—H. P. Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*

The book you now hold is a companion piece to the **Ravenloft** setting book. Many rules and terms used here are explained in that tome. In addition, you will need the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Monster Manual* to make full use of the material found here.

The Gothic adventure genre is built on a foundation of mystery, and this book is filled with secrets that player characters should discover only through adventuring. If you are a player in a **Ravenloft** campaign, you should stop reading now; this book will rob you of the fun of uncovering these secrets for yourself. If you're the DM of a **Ravenloft** campaign or a DM looking for horrific elements to add to your own campaign setting, then welcome: This book was written just for you.

### New Prestige Class: **Witch-Hunter**

The folk of **Ravenloft** commonly apply the term "witch-hunter" to scholarly adventurers who research dangerous creatures (whether they be hags or other night horrors), seeking their weaknesses, to eliminate them more easily. The witch-hunter typically prefers to defeat her foes through superior tactics and guile rather than through brute force. In their studies, witch-hunters often learn to cast a few protective spells, which sometimes earns them a reputation as "hedge mages." Witch-hunters are usually of good alignment, but some become too zealous in their pursuit of the children of the night. Evil witch-hunters usually still believe themselves to be good but look the other way if their hunts accidentally bring unfortunate innocents to harm.

**Hit Die:** d6.

#### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a witch-hunter, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +2

**Gather Information:** 4 ranks.

**Knowledge (monster lore):** 3 ranks in the applicable skill for the first studied foe.

**Feats:** Courage, Expertise

**Special:** You must have survived a hostile encounter with your first studied foe.

#### **Class Skills**

The witch-hunter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (monster lore) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis). See Chapter Four in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.





**Class Features**

All of the following are class features of the witch-hunter prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A witch-hunter is proficient with all simple weapons, light armor and medium armor.

**Studied Foe:** At 1st level, a witch-hunter may select a specific type of creature (vampires, ghosts, werewolves, hags, goblinoids, etc.) as a studied foe. See Table 3–14 in the *Player's Handbook* for examples. A witch-hunter can select her own race as a studied foe only if the witch-hunter or her race is evil. A few witch-hunters are said to be reformed monsters, seeking to wipe out the menace posed by their own kind.

The witch-hunter has scrutinized the habits and weaknesses of her studied foe so closely that she gains a +2 insight bonus to Sense Motive checks when used against that type of creature. Likewise, in combat, she gains a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls and saving throws against her chosen foe.

At 4th, 7th and 10th level, the witch-hunter may select a new studied foe. To select a creature as a studied foe, the witch-hunter must have at least 3 ranks in the applicable Knowledge (monster lore) skill. For example, a witch-hunter who wishes to add golems as a studied foe must first have at least 3 ranks in Knowledge (construct lore). A witch-hunter can select the same creature more than once as her studied foe, representing further study; the effects stack. A witch-hunter who selects weretigers as a studied foe twice, for example, gains a +4 insight bonus to all Sense Motive checks and a +2 insight bonus to all attack rolls and saves made against weretigers.

**Turn or Rebuke Undead:** Witch-hunters often possess remarkable reservoirs of faith. When a witch-hunter reaches 3rd level, she gains the supernatural ability to turn undead, if good, or rebuke undead, if evil. Morally neutral witch-hunters can choose to do one or the other. Once the player makes this decision, it cannot be reversed. The witch-hunter turns or rebukes undead as would a cleric of two levels lower.

**Spells:** Beginning at 1st level, a witch-hunter gains the ability to cast a small number of arcane spells. To cast a spell, the witch-hunter must have an Intelligence score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a witch-hunter with an Intelligence of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Witch-hunter bonus spells are based on Intelligence, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the witch-hunter's Intelligence modifier. When the witch-hunter may have 0 spells of a given level (see Table 1–2), the witch-hunter can employ only bonus spells. A witch-hunter without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The witch-hunter's spell list appears below. A witch-hunter prepares and casts spells just as a wizard does.

**Witch-hunter Spell List**

Witch-hunters choose their spells from the following list:

**1st level** — *alarm, detect magic, detect undead, disrupt undead, hold portal, light, protection from (chaos, evil, good, law), read magic.*

**2nd level** — *darkvision, daylight, knock, magic weapon, see invisibility.*

**3rd level** — *diminish undead, dispel magic, halt undead, magic circle against (chaos, evil, good, law).*

**4th level** — *break enchantment, detect scrying, remove curse, suppress lycanthropy.*

**Table 1–1: The Witch-Hunter**

Class Lvl	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	1st studied foe	0	—	—	—
2	+1	+0	+0	+3		1	—	—	—
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Turn/rebuke undead	1	0	—	—
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	2nd studied foe	1	1	—	—
5	+3	+1	+1	+4		1	1	0	—





# Darklords

*O Justice!*

*I suffer now for what has former been:  
"Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin."*

—John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*

A great villain lies at the heart of every great Gothic adventure. This chapter outlines many of Ravenloft's most notorious and active villains, including many of its darklords.



## Character Format

The NPC descriptions in this chapter adhere to the format outlined below.

**Statistics:** The character's complete game statistics. Some characters use special rules found in the **Ravenloft** setting book, such as vampire aging categories. The character's native language is always listed first and marked with an asterisk.

**Background:** The character's history, explaining how she became the villain she is today.

**Current Sketch:** The character's personality and current activities.

**Combat:** Tactics and strategies the character usually uses in combat. If the character has any unique special attacks or qualities, these will also be detailed here.

**Lair:** The character's home or where he can often be encountered. This includes the rank of the lair's sinkhole of evil. The listed sinkhole ranks do not include the +1 modifier a darklord exudes. Sinkholes of evil are detailed in Chapter Three of the **Ravenloft** setting book.

**Closing the Borders:** If the character is a darklord, this section details how a border closure manifests in her domain.

## Darklords by Domain

Darklords with page references can be found in this chapter. Other Darklords will be presented in future releases.

**Avonleigh:** Morgoroth, the ghost of a powerful wizard who wiped out the last known relatives of Kateri Shadowborn.

**Barovia:** Count Strahd von Zarovich. See page 10.

**Bluetspur:** The illithid god-brain, a living conglomerate of thousands of mind flayer brains.

**Borca:** Ivana Boritsi and Ivan Dilisnya. See pages 13 and 14, respectively.

**Darkon:** Azalin Rex. See page 17.

**Dementlieu:** Dominic d'Honaire. See page 21.

**Falkovnia:** Vlad Drakov. See page 23.

**Forlorn:** Tristen ApBlanc, a bard cursed by a betrayed druid to exist as a vampire by day and a ghost by night.

**G'Henna:** Yagno Petrovna.

**Har'Akir:** Pharaoh Ankhtepot.

**Hazlan:** Hazlik. See page 25.

**Invidia:** Gabrielle Aderre. See page 27.

**Kartakass:** Harkon Lukas. See page 30.

**Keening:** Tristessa. See page 33.

**Lamordia:** Mordenheim's monster, Adam. See page 38. See also Dr. Victor Mordenheim, on page 35.

**Markovia:** Frantisek Markov. See page 40.

**Mordent:** Lord Wilfred Godefroy. See page 42.

**Nidala:** Elena Faith-hold.

**Necropolis:** Death, a fearsome spectral entity Azalin created during the Grim Harvest.

**The Nocturnal Sea:** Meredoth, a reclusive necromancer who resides with his experiments on Todstein Island.

**Nova Vaasa:** Malken. See page 44.

**Odiare:** Maligno.

**Paridon:** Sodo.

**Pharazia:** Diamabel.

**Richemulot:** Jacqueline Renier. See page 47.

**Rokushima Táiyo:** Shinpi Haki, the geist (a rank 1 ghost lacking the manifestation ability) of a ruthless warlord and father of the feuding *shujin*.

**Sanguinia:** Prince Ladislav Mircea.

**Saragoss:** Draga Salt-Biter, a bloodthirsty pirate captain and wereshark.

**The Sea of Sorrows:** Captain Pieter van Riese, an obsessive explorer in life, now the captain of a ghost ship.

**Sebua:** Tiyet, a well-preserved ancient who must eat living hearts to survive.

**Shadowborn Manor:** Ebonbane.

**The Shadow Rift:** Gwydion, a colossal alien monstrosity from the Plane of Shadow and creator of the shadow fey.

**Sithicus:** Inza Kulchevich. See Azrael Dak on page 49.

**Souragne:** Anton Misroi.

**Sri Raji:** Arijani.

**Tepest:** The Three Hags. See page 51.

**Timor:** The Hive Queen, a human princess who had herself transformed into a marikith queen (see **Denizens of Darkness**) to frighten her mother to death.

**Valachan:** Baron Urik von Kharkov. See page 55.

**Vechor:** Easan the Mad. See page 57.

**Verbrek:** Alfred Timothy. See page 60.

**Vorostokov:** Gregor Zolnik.

**The Wildlands:** Crocodile.







# The Darklords of the Core Domains





## Count Strahd von Zarovich, Darklord of Barovia

**Male human ancient vampire Ftr4/Nec16:** CR 24; SZ M Undead (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 20d12; hp 154; Init +8; Spd 50; AC 31 (touch 18, flat-footed 27); Atk: +19 melee (1d6+7 and energy drain, slam) or +24/+19/+14 melee (1d10+13, +4 *bastard sword*) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+6, +2 *mighty* [Str 18] *composite longbow*); SA Blood drain, children of the night, command undead, create spawn, domination, energy drain, spells; SQ Alternate Form, cold and electricity resistance 20, darkvision 60 ft., familiar (sentinel bat, see **Denizens of Darkness**), fast healing 6, gaseous form, light sleep, master of the realm, spider climb, turn resistance +9, undead, vampire weaknesses; SR 15; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +18; Str 24, Dex 18, Con —, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +10, Bluff +15, Climb +12, Concentration +5, Handle Animal +9, Hide +14, Intimidate +7, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +10, Listen +16, Move Silently +14, Perform (dance, mandolin, organ, pan pipes, recorder, storytelling) +7, Ride +9, Search +15, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +10 (+12 to learn Necromancy spells), Spot +16; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*bastard sword*), Expertise, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Maximize Spell, Power Attack, Mobility, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Weapon Focus (*bastard sword*), Weapon Specialization (*bastard sword*).

**Languages:** Balok\*, Darkonese, Draconic, Luktar, Mordentish, Vaasi.

**Wizard Spells per Day:** 5/6/6/6/6/5/4/4/3. Base DC = 15 + spell level, 17 + spell level for Necromancy spells. Prohibited Schools: Enchantment.

**Spellbook:** 0—all; 1st—*burning hands, cause fear, chill touch, comprehend languages, hold portal, magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp, unseen servant*; 2nd—*alter self, darkness, detect thoughts, fog cloud, ghoul touch, ground fog, invisibility, knock, locate object, scare, shatter, spectral hand*; 3rd—*dispel magic, explosive runes, fireball, gentle repose, gust of wind, halt undead, lightning bolt, nondetection, sleet storm, stinking cloud, tongues, vampiric touch*; 4th—*arcane eye, contagion, detect scrying, dimension door, enervation, fear, ice storm, induce lycanthropy, polymorph other, polymorph self, shadow conjuration, solid fog, wall of ice*; 5th—*animate dead, greater shadow conjuration, magic jar, nightmare, passwall, sending, telekinesis, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*antimagic field, circle of death, contingency, control weather, guards and wards, planar binding, shades, stone to flesh*; 7th—*control undead, delayed blast fireball, finger of death, forcecage, limited wish, misty summons, shadow walk, spell turning*; 8th—*clone, horrid wilting, maze, symbol*.

**Signature Possessions:** +4 *bastard sword*, +2 *mighty* (Str 18) *composite longbow*, *amulet of proof against detection and*

*location, bracelets of armor +6 (as bracers), cloak of resistance +3, crystal ball, gloves of dexterity +2, ring of elemental resistance, major (fire), ring of protection +4, rod of absorption.*

Lean and strong, with a noble bearing, Strahd is a powerful presence. His features are strong and chiseled, his gaze commanding, and his voice deep and full. He moves with a liquid grace and speaks with the authority of one who expects to be obeyed. Detracting from his appearance of strength is his pallid skin, but feeding returns the color to it and gives him a healthier look.

His most unusual features are his ears, which are pointed like those of an elf. He sometimes disguises this by combing his dark hair over the tips, but he can easily explain them away by falsely claiming to have elven blood in his ancestry, so he usually does not bother to hide them unless he is trying not to be recognized. His long, sharp nails are also unusual, and he often wears gloves to conceal them. Unlike those of most vampires, Strahd's fangs are readily concealable, retracting when he has no need for them.

Strahd dresses in the finery of a Barovian nobleman, preferring black accented with red and white. He prefers to wear long cloaks and usually wears a gold pendant with a large red stone around his neck.

### Background

*The Tome of Strahd* is a self-serving account of Strahd's background (see Chapter One of the **Ravenloft** setting book). There is some truth in most of the details, but Strahd glosses over the horror and evil of his own actions. In making a pact with an unknown entity Strahd took to be Death itself and murdering his brother to seal it, Strahd set in motion events that cursed not only himself and Barovia, but indirectly, a great many other lands. Whether Ravenloft would exist in its present form without Strahd's wickedness is uncertain, but his evil appears, at the very least, to have been a significant factor.

Since the time of the account given in *The Tome of Strahd*, Strahd himself has grown in evil and might, becoming a necromancer of great power and learning much about the prison that binds him. He has had dealings, in one form or another, with most of the powerful figures of the Core, forming alliances and enmities that shape the face of Ravenloft to this day. Of particular note are his alliance with Madame Eva, in which he granted the Vistani free passage in return for their passing





information to him, and his hatred of the lich Azalin, who had been his reluctant servant and is now his greatest foe. Their rivalry came to a head during the Grand Conjunction, when Azalin came close to destroying Strahd, but Strahd survived that experience just as he has every other. The face of Ravenloft has changed much over the centuries, but Strahd remains the one constant.

### Current Sketch

Strahd does not often involve himself in the affairs of Barovia, only infrequently emerging from his castle to ensure that his laws are being followed. Though he cares little for the welfare of his people, contemptuous as he is of most other beings, he defends his property zealously. Barovia and its people are his to control, and anyone who seeks to usurp his authority will face the full brunt of his wrath.

Strahd has been a vampire for over four centuries, and in that time, he has learned to strategize in ways that very few mortals could. His plots are never as simple as they seem, and he never lets anyone see the true motivations behind his actions. He is patient to an inhuman degree and is willing to simply outlive his enemies if that is what is required to defeat them. He is ruthless at heart, however, and if he sees an opportunity to quickly crush a potential threat, he will take immediate advantage.

Strahd's greatest weakness is his love for Tatyana. Though she threw herself to what must surely have been certain death, no body was ever recovered, and over the centuries, many women have been born in Barovia who resemble her in everything but name. Strahd believes these women to be reincarnations of his lost love and sees each one has a new opportunity to win Tatyana's heart. Unfortunately, each effort has ended in failure. Something always takes the girl from him before he can claim her, and each failure wounds him more deeply. There is little Strahd would not do in pursuit of Tatyana.

### Combat

Strahd may be the most dangerous of the darklords of Ravenloft. He combines power and cunning to a degree that few can hope to match. He is well versed in the uses of his vampiric powers and strikes his enemies quickly and brutally. He is free



from many of the weaknesses that bedevil vampires and uses these immunities to surprise the would-be vampire slayers he faces. He is an accomplished necromancer and uses his spells to efficient and deadly effect.

Despite his personal power, Strahd is not rash and will not needlessly risk himself when another will do in his place. He has many minions he can call upon at a moment's notice, from animal servants to vampire slaves to magically summoned beasts.

**Special Attacks:** *Children of the Night (Su):* Strahd may use this ability to call forth worgs instead of the wolves that most vampires call. He may also use this ability to call forth 1d10 Strahd zombies or 2d10 Strahd skeletons (see *Denizens of Darkness*).

*Vampire Abilities:* The save DC against Strahd's vampire abilities is 24.





**Special Qualities:** *Master of the Realm (Su):* Strahd may open or close the two main gates on the Old Svalich Road as a free action from anywhere in his domain. He has similar power over the gates and doors of Castle Ravenloft, where he also senses the entry of any creature with an Intelligence of at least 3. From anywhere in his domain and without concentrating, Strahd may control his horse-drawn carriage as if he were driving it. He can sense the presence of any creature with an Intelligence of at least 3 that comes within 30 feet of the carriage and can also sense when a such a creature enters the carriage.

**Strahd's Contingency:** Strahd always has a *contingency* cast on himself that *teleports* him to a hidden mountain sanctuary whenever he is exposed to light that could destroy him or render him helpless.

**Vampire Weaknesses:** Garlic, mirrors and holy symbols do not affect Strahd. He may freely enter any building in Barovia without being invited. Strahd can tolerate 10 rounds of sunlight before he is destroyed. Like most vampires, however, he may only take partial actions while exposed to sunlight.

## Cair

Strahd's lair may be the most infamous in the Core. Castle Ravenloft is a gigantic structure, seated at the top of a 1,000-foot rock spire. Strahd almost never allows visitors, and any interlopers would find that it is replete with vampiric slaves, animated corpses, and traps both magical and mundane. Legends of heroes attempting to enter the castle and destroy its lord are common in Barovia, and none have a happy ending.

## Closing the Borders

When Strahd wishes to close his domain, a thick fog rises from the ground to surround Barovia. This fog has the same properties as the choking vapors that shroud the village of Barovia (see sidebar).

## Strahd's Choking fog

The ring of fog that surrounds the village of Barovia is a lethal poison, one that lays dormant until an unfortunate soul attempts to escape the village. While entering the village of Barovia is harmless enough, leaving is another matter entirely. Any creature without poison immunity that steps beyond the outer edge of the fog will immediately die in a frothing fit of apoplexy (no saving throw). A *Vistana* with the *Alchemy* skill can make an elixir (DC 25) that renders a creature immune to the fog's effects for 10 minutes. The *Vistani* sell this elixir and escort travelers through the choking fog for 5 gp a head. *Giorgio* traders call this the "captive tax," but without this service, goods would no longer flow through the southern *Balinoks*. The *Vistani* never allow *giorgio* to learn the elixir's formula, however, and they will deny their services to any travelers without hesitation if Strahd instructs them to do so.



## Ivana Boritsi, Darklord of Borca

**Female human Arit2:** CR 12; SZ M Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 12d8+72; hp 140; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk: +9/+4 melee (1d4, +1 dagger), +10/+5 (1d4-1, masterwork dart); SA Kiss of death; SQ Detect poison, poison immunity; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 20.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +8, Appraise +9, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +10, Heal +3, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +8, Read Lips +8, Ride +6, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8; Alertness, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Alchemy, Bluff).

**Languages:** Balok\*, Falkovnian, Mordentish.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 dagger, masterwork darts, amulet of natural armor +2, bracelets of armor +3 (as bracers), dress of charisma +2 (as cloak), ring of protection +1.

Ivana has not aged since becoming darklord of Borca. Though she is in her 60s, she doesn't look to be a day over 18. Her appearance remains that of an achingly beautiful young woman, with dark black hair and deep blue eyes. She has an air of innocence about her that is completely contrary to her cruel character. Her appearance is marred only by her lips and fingernails, which are a sickly shade of blue. She disguises these flaws with the careful application of makeup.

When Ivana sleeps, her appearance changes markedly. Her face swells, her tongue protrudes and blackens, and her skin takes a nauseating gray shade. She looks very much like a victim of poisoning and would appear dead if not for the rise and fall of her chest.

### Background

Ivana is the daughter of Camille Dilisnya, the former lord of Borca, and Klaus Boritsi, a minor nobleman. Her father disappeared before she had the chance to know him, just one more in the long string of Camille's murders.

Camille tried to instill in Ivana the same disdain for men that she had, but for a long time, Camille was unable to completely poison her daughter's heart against them. Ivana had a romantic longing to experience true love, and Camille was unable to remove it. When Ivana was 17, she met a young man named Pieter, a poet and musician who impressed her with his words and songs. Pieter himself, however, was more interested in his

art than love, and even Ivana's considerable beauty was not sufficient to garner his attention. Ivana found this aloofness even more stirring and began to pursue Pieter almost to the exclusion of all else. As she continuously tried to capture Pieter's attention and become a part of his life, she found herself becoming more and more captivated by his art. Once she began to feel as deeply for his work as he did, Pieter began to share her affections.

Unfortunately, Camille was not willing to let her daughter find the happiness in love that she herself had always found elusive. Using her resemblance to Ivana and the cover of night, she was able to deceive Pieter and make her way into his bed. As Camille had planned, Ivana found the two of them together. Camille later claimed to have been seduced and demanded that Ivana punish Pieter in the time-honored manner of Dilisnya women. Ivana did just that, employing a powerful magic poison that saturated her body while doing her no harm. A single kiss was all it took to kill Pieter. Camille had underestimated Ivana's bitterness toward her, however, and years later, Ivana would ensure that her mother suffered a similar fate. In 711 BC, Ivana became lord of Borca in her mother's place.

Ivana would remain unchallenged as Borca's lord until the Grand Conjunction, when her cousin Ivan Dilisnya became trapped in Borca with her. Ivan had once been lord of his own domain, but now, the two powerful and treacherous personalities are forced to coexist. Ivana has managed to remain the dominant of the two, but she must constantly be on guard against Ivan's schemes.

### Current Sketch

Ivana's experience with Pieter has left her bitter and at least as hateful toward men as her mother had been. She delights in destroying the relationships of others and humors the men who court her just so she may have the pleasure of poisoning them later. She has managed to disguise these murderous activities for the most part, but the people of Borca remain suspicious and call her the Black Widow when she cannot hear.

Deep within, Ivana still longs for love. Unfortunately, the poison that courses through her body makes this dream an impossibility.

Ivana is not interested in ruling Borca in a conventional sense. She rarely concerns herself with such things as passing laws. She is interested in maintaining her decadent lifestyle, though, and taxes the nobility of Borca mercilessly, with her





"rent collectors" making sure no one withholds. The nobles, in turn, extort from the commoners, and thus, Ivana's excesses drain the very livelihood from her domain.

## Combat

Ivana is not a strong combatant, but she has many hired thugs to defend her. She also has her innocent bearing, which often allows her to get close enough to an opponent to make use of her deadly kiss.

**Special Attacks:** *Kiss of Death (Ex)*: The kiss of Ivana Boritsi is far deadlier than any poison known to man. Ivana can kiss a helpless creature as a standard action or kiss a resisting creature with a successful grapple check. Any living creature that is kissed must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 22) or immediately suffer 3d6 points of temporary Constitution damage. The victim must continue to make a Fortitude save each minute following the kiss, suffering 3d6 points of temporary Constitution damage with each failure, until the victim dies or receives a *neutralize poison* spell. Creatures that are immune to poison due to their creature type (i.e., constructs, elementals, oozes and undead) are immune to the kiss.

**Special Qualities:** *Detect Poison (Su)*: Ivana continuously *detects poison*, as the spell, on all creatures and objects within 50 feet. This ability requires no concentration or action on Ivana's part.

*Poison Immunity (Ex)*: Ivana is immune to poison.

## Lair

Ivana's private estate, Misericordia, is located southeast of the town of Levkarest. It is a sprawling and complex piece of architecture, filled with hidden passageways and secret doors that only Ivana can freely navigate. Ivana frequently entertains guests here, but just as frequently bars everyone from entering, even her servants, desiring solitude. The estate is a rank 3 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

When Ivana wishes to seal her domain, an undetectable catalyst permeates the air surrounding Borca. This substance reacts with the waters of the domain to create a lethal poison — even when that water is already coursing through a creature's veins. Creatures that have consumed any liquid from Borca in the last 48 hours become nauseated

when they cross the border and will die in 1d4 x 10 minutes unless they return to Borca. The nauseated condition ends 1d6 rounds after the creature crosses back into Borca. Borca's closed borders do not affect creatures immune to Ivana's poison kiss.



## van Dilisnya, Darklord of Borca

**Male human Ari12:** CR 12; SZ M Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 12d8+72; hp 140; Init -1; Spd 30; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 17); Atk: +11/+6 melee (1d6, +1 rapier) or +10/+5 ranged (1d4-1, masterwork dart); SA Envenom; SQ Deadly alchemy, immunities; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +10, Appraise +12, Bluff +11, Disguise +9, Gather Information +9, Handle Animal +8, Innuendo +10, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Listen +12, Perform (buffoonery, dance, drama, epic, juggling, mime, ode, storytelling) +9, Ride +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12; Alertness, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Alchemy, Bluff), Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

**Languages:** Balok\*, Falkovnian, Luktar, Mordentish, Vaasi.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 rapier, masterwork darts, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *bracelets of armor* +3 (as bracers), *cloak of charisma* +2, *ring of protection* +2.

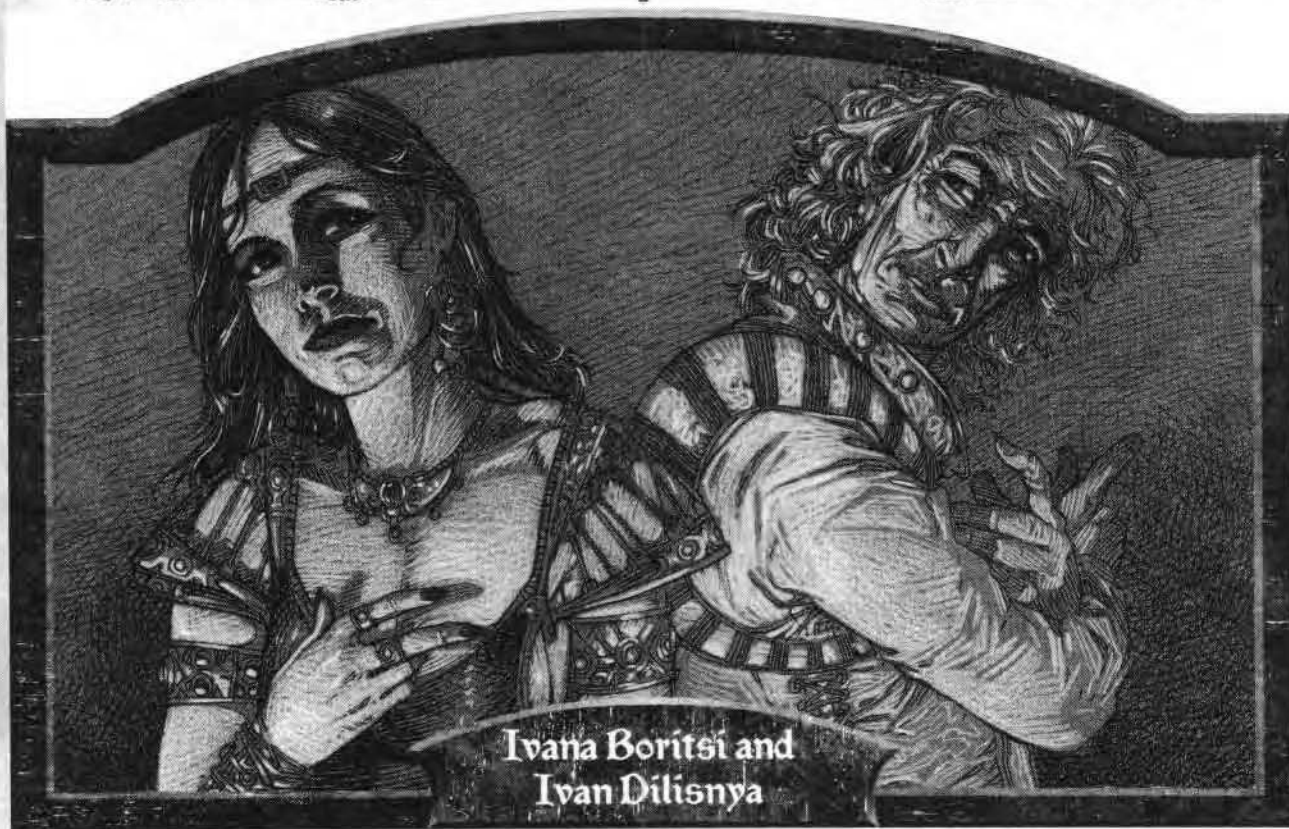
Ivan is a thin man with curly gray hair, streaked with the blond of his youth. He is an extremely animated person, to the point of histrionics. He paces and poses as though on a stage, lowering his voice to a barely audible whisper only to send it booming to emphasize a point. He gesticulates with every word and often laughs suddenly for no apparent reason. He makes for most unusual company, and it is doubtful anyone would tolerate his presence if not for his power, wealth and willingness to eliminate those who displease him.

## Background

The Dilisnyas have been in Ravenloft since its earliest days, being among the guests at Castle Ravenloft on the fateful night of Strahd's death and rebirth. Some were able to survive the horrors of that evening, and the Dilisnyas have persevered ever since.

Ivan was born in Borca in 689, on the same night as Ivana Boritsi. He was a troublesome child from the very start, prone to fits and tantrums. By the age of six, he was torturing small animals and was only 10 when he committed his first murder, poisoning a servant girl for the crime of stealing a pastry. Ivan laughed delightedly as the girl gasped





**Ivana Boritsi and  
Ivan Dilisnya**

for air. At the age of 12, he poisoned his mother, making it look as though she had died of an unknown illness.

Ivan seemed filled with hatred for the whole world, save for his older sister Kristina. The two siblings loved each other dearly, and Kristina had no inkling of just how evil her younger brother was. Instead, she doted on him, spoiling him to the best of her ability. Ivan began to feel perversely possessive of his older sister, and these feelings would have tragic consequences.

When Ivan was 20, Kristina took a husband, and Ivan's jealousy was extreme. Nothing came of it, however, until a year later, when Kristina had a child. Irrationally, Ivan felt betrayed by this, as though he had been replaced in his older sister's affections. Enraged, Ivan poisoned both Kristina and her husband. Fortunately, a midwife escaped with the child before Ivan could finish exacting "revenge."

Ivan had been too passionate to conceal his responsibility for the murders, and his own family chased him from Borca and into the Mists. There, he became the darklord of Dorvinia. His rulership of that domain lasted until the Grand Conjunction.

Terrified by the tremors, Ivan sought out his cousin Ivana Boritsi for comfort. The two had always been close and, even after being trapped in separate domains, had corresponded regularly. The two were in close proximity when the Grand Conjunction ended, and their domains were merged, with Borca subsuming Dorvinia. Ivan now shares lordship with Ivana, and the awkwardness of this situation has driven the cousins to mutual hatred.

### **Current Sketch**

As a young man, the only thing Ivan loved as much as watching poison course through a person was tempting his palate with fine foods and drink. Since becoming a darklord, he has been robbed of his sense of taste. The finest foods are like ash in his mouth, the best wines like vinegar. The loss of his palate has left Ivan feeling empty and dissatisfied, unable to enjoy the luxury he lives in. He often hosts extravagant dinners in the hopes of garnering some vicarious enjoyment through his guests, but these usually end badly. He erupts in jealous rages when his guests enjoy the food too much and offended rages if they seem not to like it. The best







one can do is give one's noncommittal approval and hope that Ivan is in a good mood.

Ivan's other obsession is with his age. He is nearing 70, and while he remains as vigorous as a man half his age, he need only look at his cousin Ivana, who has not aged a day in over 40 years, to feel the weight of time bearing down heavily upon him. Ivan has tried to extract the secret of eternal youth from Ivana but has failed. He believes that she is hiding it from him out of spite, but the truth is that Ivana does not know why she has remained youthful for so long. Ivan's jealousy has deepened the wedge between the two.

## Combat

Ivan is not well suited to direct combat, preferring to poison his enemies from a distance. He has a large number of thugs at his command, though, and will happily send them into combat in his place, while he stands back to watch amusedly.

**Special Attacks:** *Envenom (Ex)*: As a standard action, Ivan can touch an object (not a creature) weighing up to 50 pounds to render it permanently poisonous. This is a contact poison that can never be removed from the object; the poison infuses the object's very essence. Creatures that touch the object must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 26) or suffer 1d6 initial temporary ability damage and 2d6 secondary temporary ability damage. Ivan can decide at the time he poisons the object whether the poison will inflict Strength, Dexterity or Constitution damage.

**Special Qualities:** *Deadly Alchemy (Ex)*: Ivan can use the Alchemy skill to make nearly any poison listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The DC is 10 + the poison's market price in gold pieces divided by 100 (round up). Ivan must still pay one third of the poison's market price and spend the appropriate amount of time on the process, as detailed under the Craft skill in the *Player's Handbook*.

**Immunities (Ex)**: Ivan is immune to disease, paralysis and poison.

## Cair

Degravo is the Dilisnya estate, and it is as chaotic as its master. Ivan is constantly in motion within its walls, changing quarters to suit his whim

and leaving the rest of the estate to gather dust. He loves to host gatherings, and once an invitation is extended, attendance is mandatory. It is rare that all his guests survive the visit. The estate is a rank 2 sinkhole of evil, though this often rises to rank 3 during gatherings.

## Closing the Borders

Though Ivan is in most respects on equal footing with his fellow darklord, Ivana Boritsi, the power to close Borca's borders resides with her alone.

## Borrowed Time

Ivan Dilisnya commands fanatical loyalty among his inner circle of servants, guards and spies, chiefly through his use of an insidious poison known as Borrowed Time. This venom courses permanently through the veins of Ivan's key minions. Ivan poisoned these souls with Borrowed Time years ago, laying a sentence of death that only he can stay. A creature poisoned with Borrowed Time will take 3d6 points of temporary Constitution damage every day at sunset (no saving throw) unless she ingests an elixir dubbed Mercy less than 10 minutes prior to sunset. Ivan doles out this Mercy each day, though even the appearance of disloyalty can provoke Ivan to withhold Mercy at the last moment.

Ivan creates both Borrowed Time and Mercy with the Alchemy skill. For such purposes, the market price of these substances is 2,500 gp for Borrowed Time and 50 gp for Mercy. Although creatures with poison immunity cannot be affected by Borrowed Time, it does not function like most poisons. There is no saving throw allowed and no damage inflicted until sunset. A dose of Borrowed Time must be ingested each day for seven consecutive days for it to begin taking effect; thus, it is somewhat impractical for Ivan to inflict the poison on anyone but his own servants.





## zalin Rex, Darklord of Darkon

**Male human lich Wiz18:** CR 23; SZ M Undead (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 18d12; hp 126; Init +0; Spd 30; AC 20 (touch 10, flatfooted 20); Atk: +12/+7 melee touch (1d8+5 [Will save for half] + paralysis, negative energy) or +7/+4 ranged touch (by spell); SA Damaging touch, fear aura, modify memory, paralyzing touch, spells, undead dominion; SQ Alternate form, damage reduction 15/+1, familiar (imp), immunities, lich sight, turn resistance +6, undead; SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +7 (immune to effects that require a Fort save unless they affect objects), Ref +7, Will +16; Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +19, Bluff +8, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +6, Hide +8, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +25, Knowledge (undead lore) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +8, Scry +16, Search +15, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +26, Spot +10; Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Forge Ring, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*dimension door, scrying, sending, steal vitality, telekinesis*).

**Languages:** Darkonese\*, Balok, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal, Mordentish, Vaasi.

**Wizard Spells per Day:** 4/6\*\*/6\*\*/6\*\*/5/5/5/4/3/2. Base DC = 17 + spell level, 19 + spell level for Necromancy spells.

\*\* Azalin can use his *rings of wizardry* to double his daily allotment of 1st, 2nd and/or 3rd level spells to 12/day. He can only wear two of the three rings at a time, however, and will plan accordingly.

**Spellbook:** 0—all; 1st—*alarm, animate rope, change self, charm person, comprehend languages, enlarge, hold portal, identify, magic missile, message, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, silent image, Tenser's floating disc, unseen servant*; 2nd—*alter self, arcane lock, darkness, daylight, flaming sphere, invisibility, knock, locate object, magic mouth, minor image, mirror image, see invisibility, shatter, spectral hand, Tasha's hideous laughter, web*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball, fly, gaseous form, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, magic circle against evil, magic circle against good, nondetection, suggestion, summon monster III, wind wall*; 4th—*arcane eye, bestow curse, charm monster, confusion, contagion, dimension door, emotion, Evard's black tentacles, fire trap, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, polymorph other, scrying, shadow conjuration, stoneskin, wall of ice*; 5th—*animal growth, animate dead, dominate person, feeblemind, hold monster, magic jar, mind fog, passwall, permanency, sending, shadow evocation, summon monster V, telekinesis, wall of stone*; 6th—*acid fog, analyze dweomer, Bigby's forceful hand, contingency, disintegrate, eyebite, flesh to stone, geas/quest, guards and wards, legend lore, permanent image, planar binding, project image, steal vitality, stone to flesh, true seeing*; 7th—*Drawmij's instant summons, finger of death, forcecage, limited wish, power word, stun, spell turning, summon monster VII, teleport without error, vision*; 8th—

*binding, demand, incendiary cloud, maze, Otiluke's telekinetic sphere, prismatic wall, symbol, trap the soul*; 9th—*Bigby's crushing hand, energy drain, foresight, gate, Mordenkainen's disjunction, temporal stasis, wish*.

**Signature Possessions:** *Black robe of the archmagi, crystal ball with telepathy, helm of comprehending languages and reading magic (the Iron Crown, lost in the Requiem), ring of wizardry I, ring of wizardry II, ring of wizardry III, stone of controlling grave elementals (as earth), wand of emotion (18th-level caster), wand of ice storm (18th-level caster)*. Azalin has accumulated a vast collection of scrolls and magic items, many crafted by his own hand, including a wide variety of cursed items. If Azalin has time to prepare, he will often wield magic items specifically tailored to his foes' weaknesses or see to it that cursed items fall into his foes' hands.

Azalin is a lich: an undead spirit inhabiting a skeleton, held together by foul magic. The dusty bones Azalin now wears once belonged to his grown son, Irik Zal'honan; his original body was discarded long ago. His eye sockets are black pits burning with pinpoints of hellish light. Azalin has long considered lichdom a poor substitute for true immortality, and his fleshless hands lack the dexterity he enjoyed in life, infuriating him to no end.

When he wants to shock onlookers, Azalin wears just a burial shroud to gird his loins, a cape to drape across his shoulders and a few ornate baubles to adorn his arms. The cape is usually black with blood-red trim, left open to expose his withered body. Most of the "baubles" carry powerful enchantments. Azalin was known to wear a crown of black iron, with a single large yellow gem adorning the crown's central spike. This crown was lost in the Requiem; Azalin believes that it is now in Death's possession and seeks its return. Azalin usually dons more regal—and concealing—garb, however.

Whenever in the public eye, Azalin uses his alternate form ability to cloak himself in powerful illusions. He can choose any humanoid appearance, male or female, close to his own height. Even his voice and odor change to fit the illusion. Unless assuming a false identity for a specific purpose, however, Azalin wears an illusion approximating his appearance near the end of his mortal life: an aged man with aquiline features and a stern demeanor. Azalin continues to include the Iron Crown in this illusion out of habit and pride.

When not wrapped in illusion, Azalin smells of mold, dust and decay—the scent of death. The only thing Azalin's illusions cannot conceal is his aura of netherworldly cold. This otherworldly chill is not harmful in itself, but even arctic creatures shiver in his presence. Because of this, Azalin





always keeps his distance from those he wishes to deceive.

## Memories of Darkon

1d3 months after entering Darkon, newcomers lose all memory of their former lives (no saving throw) beyond the domain. The lost memories are replaced by complete memories of a lifetime in Darkon. Many newcomers "claimed" by Darkon's soil adopt local gravestones and visit them frequently, believing them to be the final resting places of their ancestors. Altered memories never change a character's statistics, alignment or basic personality. A claimed character automatically gains fluency in the Darkonese language for free.

True natives of Darkon, many of whom having truly lived in the domain for generations, are aware of this phenomenon but consider it a taboo topic for discussion. Instead, they euphemistically refer to folk who have "rediscovered their roots." After all, few people want to face the possibility that one's entire life may be a lie.

Native Darkonians are immune to the domain's memory-leeching effects. If a claimed character leaves Darkon, her true memories are immediately restored.

## Background

Firan Zal'honan was born almost four centuries ago on a distant world, the second of three sons of the lord of a small earldom. Firan began studying magic at a young age and soon was dabbling in dark forces beyond his ken. When Firan was 15, a failed demon summoning resulted in the death of his beloved younger brother Irik, and Firan was expelled from his home. Firan quietly continued his studies in the dark arts, learning forbidden, necromantic methods of extending his own life by stealing the life energy of his foes.

More than three decades later, when his elder brother died after having ruled for 13 years, Firan assumed the crown. Firan's citizens loved him in those days, calling him their *Azal'Lan* — their "wizard-king." Firan was known for his loyalty to his subjects and for the harsh demands he made of them in return.

As Firan neared the age of 60, he began to reach the limits of his life-extending spells and considered the need for an heir. He wed a kind young noblewoman, whom Firan thought of as little more than a brood mare. She despised him, and it took them 18 years to produce an heir. His wife died giving birth to their son, Irik, cursing Firan with her final breath.

Firan tried to raise Irik in his own image, grooming him for the throne, but the boy had his mother's kind heart, which Firan interpreted as weakness. When Irik was caught helping Firan's political foes escape, Firan personally and publicly executed his son. That night, as Firan blamed himself for his failures as a father, a dark, nameless force visited the Azal'Lan and offered him the secrets of becoming a lich. It took him two years to complete the rites and shed his mortality.

Firan carefully concealed his undead nature from his subjects. To conceal his true name, Firan officially changed his name to Azal'Lan, the title his subjects had been calling him for a generation. As a lich, Azal'Lan's iron rule grew even more extreme. His lands continued to prosper even while neighboring regions suffered from barbarian raids, but unrest festered within the hearts of his people.

After more than six decades of undead rule, Azal'Lan turned his armies on his most powerful neighbors. His enemies dispatched mercenaries to topple the ancient tyrant once and for all. Caught off-guard, Azal'Lan was forced to flee, losing his pursuers in a bank of fog. When the fog lifted, Azal'Lan found himself in the domain of Barovia. The first Barovians he encountered misunderstood his name, calling him "Azalin."

Azalin's grandiose ego chafed in provincial Barovia. The lich was more powerful than Count Strahd, but Azalin quickly learned of the Count's connection to the land and concluded that destroying Strahd would also destroy all of Barovia, himself included. Azalin thus remained Strahd's most powerful, least loyal servant. For 40 years, Azalin studied his planar prison and tutored Strahd in powerful magics. Azalin swore that once free from Strahd's yoke, he would never serve another master.

In 579 BC, Azalin and Strahd succeeded in opening a portal to another world, where a mysterious alchemist was engaging in experiments on the human soul — but the land was wrenched into Ravenloft as the new domain of Mordent before either villain could escape. To this day, neither can





remember more than fleeting details of what occurred there.

For Azalin, this failure was the final straw. Shortly thereafter, he left Barovia forever. The Mists parted to reveal the vast domain of Darkon. Azalin was a ruler once more but at a terrible cost. The spirit of Azalin's son, Irik, haunted a crypt in his new castle, constantly reminding Azalin of his crimes but unwilling to condemn him for them. Even worse, Azalin's magical powers were frozen, crippling his ability to study new means of escape.

More than 150 years later, Azalin manipulated the seer Hyskosa's prophecies to bring about the Grand Conjunction, nearly tearing the Realm of Dread apart. When that bid for freedom failed, Azalin spent a decade creating a magic artifact, the *doomsday device*, which would use the energy of countless stolen souls to allow him to shed his physical body permanently and flee the Mists' clutches. The darklord of Necropolis, the creature now calling itself Death, was once one of Azalin's mortal servants, transformed into a spectral horror during the testing of a prototype *device*.

Azalin's grand schemes failed again, producing the cataclysm known as the Requiem. A planar rift tore open, snuffing all life in Il Aluk, but Azalin did not find the freedom he sought. Instead, his physical form was utterly destroyed, his spirit dispersed across the entire domain. Azalin spent nearly five years merged with Darkon, unable to separate his own thoughts from those of the Darkonians. Azalin was able to reconstitute his mind, but the process was painfully slow. Eventually, he was able to send messages to his most loyal servants through their dreams. With the aid of a band of adventurers, they recently restored him to power, channeling his spirit into the physical remains of his son.

### Current Sketch

Azalin desires power above all else. The Dark Powers gave him tremendous power, but they paralyzed him as well. Azalin has an experience cap of 170,000 XP. Azalin can spend XP to cast spells or create magic items, then earn more XP to make up for the loss, but he can never earn a single XP beyond this limit or gain additional levels. Azalin can further refine magical principles he understood before becoming the lord of Darkon but is unable to learn completely new magic. Whenever he



witnesses another wizard cast a spell that he does not know, Azalin burns with jealousy.

Azalin has maintained his façade of humanity so zealously that even if his subjects are presented with evidence of his undead nature, most will reject it as preposterous. Most see him as a despotic tyrant, evil but human, who uses dark magic to extend his life. Azalin's closest advisors are fully aware of his undead status, but all of them are monsters in their own right. Most of his subjects, particularly after the years of his absence, consider Azalin a harsh but fair sovereign, the proverbial "iron fist in a velvet glove."

Azalin encourages his subjects to debase themselves, as a method of societal control and to soothe his battered ego. He throws depraved, seasonal masquerades for the nobility to flaunt his superiority. He toys with the allegiances of his servants, seeing how far they will sink to curry his favor. Azalin has honed torment to an art form.

Azalin often dedicates years of planning to his plots, and his long-term goals often strain mortal



comprehension. His thirst for power is both his driving force and his greatest failing. Once he sets his sights on achieving a goal, nothing can dissuade him from his path. As Azalin pursues a given scheme over the years, he often becomes so obsessed with its completion that he may ignore minor flaws that might appear. His foes have often used such tiny oversights to undermine his ultimate goals.

Although Azalin cannot learn new spells, he possesses a remarkable grasp of other details. He knows who has visited his kingdom in the past and who is visiting Darkon today. He can identify any Darkonian, by name, on sight. The years spent merged with Darkon have greatly enhanced Azalin's knowledge of his subjects: He can now peer into the memories of anyone within his borders (see below).

Now that Azalin wears his son's bones, Irik's spirit actively haunts his father, omnipresent, but usually manifesting only when Azalin wishes to be alone. Light to his father's darkness, Irik acts as counsel, trying to open Azalin's eyes to the self-destructive evil of his machinations. Azalin loathes Irik's visits. He sees the ghost's pleas as nothing but a distraction from his goals.

## Combat

Azalin monitors his foes, in Darkon and in other domains. His plots contain circles within circles, and his most effective tactic is to subtly set his rivals at each other's throats. Foes who believe they are capitalizing on one of Azalin's mistakes often learn that they are fulfilling his exact expectations.

Azalin only engages in melee as an absolute last resort, greatly preferring to rely on his formidable magic. When possible, the lich prefers to immobilize his opponents rather than destroy them outright. Captured foes are dragged into Azalin's dungeons to be tortured for information, subjected to eldritch experiments or added to Azalin's undead armies.

**Special Attacks:** Saving throws against Azalin's spell-like and supernatural abilities are DC 22.

**Modify Memory (Sp):** Azalin can shape the false memories created by Darkon (see the "Memories of Darkon" sidebar). Azalin can shield specific individuals from having their memories stolen, restore such memories once taken or even imprint new, false memories at any time in any subject

within Darkon's borders. Unlike the *modify memory* spell, there is no limit to the amount of time Azalin can rewrite in the subject's mind. The target receives no saving throw. However, as with Darkon's standard memory drain, subjects immediately regain their true memories the moment they leave the domain. In addition, whenever Azalin enters the memories of his subjects, their minds subconsciously touch his thoughts as well. Thus, people whose recollections Azalin reads or alters will always have disturbing, incongruent elements subtly woven into the relevant memories.

Although Azalin can peer into the minds of other spellcasters and mentally examine their prepared spells, he loses all knowledge of these new spells as quickly as he gains it. Even with this new ability, he is still no closer to escaping his curse.

**Undead Dominion (Su):** Azalin can animate any humanoid corpse in Darkon as a zombie or skeleton, as the spell *animate dead*. However, there is no limit to the number of undead Azalin can animate or control at any time. During the Dead Man's Campaign, he often animated every corpse on the battlefield, including the Falkovnian fallen, and used them to decimate the invading forces. Azalin can also automatically command all undead creatures in Darkon. Azalin can see, hear and even speak through any non-intelligent undead he commands.

**Special Qualities: Phylactery:** Azalin's phylactery is a Medium-size dragon's skull, crafted from gold and weighing 1,000 pounds. The phylactery's mass is a bitter reminder to Azalin of his limited mobility. The golden skull has a hardness rating of 60, 40 hp and a break DC of 80.

## Lair

Azalin rules Darkon from his castle, Avernus, a collection of several massive towers sitting atop a rocky hill. The slain city of Necropolis is distantly visible from the castle's highest balconies. Only scavenging birds fly above Avernus; the moment the shadow of any other bird falls upon the castle stones, the creature drops dead from the sky.

Avernus houses Azalin's court, dungeons and numerous arcane laboratories. Darkonians believe a gateway to an otherworldly abyss can be found deep within the castle's dungeons. The torment of Azalin's prisoners usually raises Avernus' sinkhole of evil to rank 3 or 4. This level has dropped in Azalin's absence, but it is certain to rise again.





## Closing the Borders

When Azalin wishes to seal his domain, an army of zombies and skeletons, 20 creatures deep,

claws up from the earth at the borders. These creatures can be turned as 21 HD undead, but there are far too many for any cleric to ever overcome.

## The Kargat

All Darkonians know of the existence of Azalin's notorious secret police, the Kargat. Many even believe that they know enough to be able to identify Kargat agents when they see them. Very few people are aware of the Kargat's true nature, however.

Only Azalin himself knows exactly how many Kargat agents are active in Darkon (and, to a lesser extent, in nearby domains), but most estimates prior to 750 BC placed their total number at over 200. Many of the Kargat's leaders were present at (and thus lost in) the Requiem, but Azalin is certainly rebuilding their ranks.

Roughly half of all Kargat are low-ranking humans and nonhumans, recruited from Darkon's back alleys and orphanages as adolescents. The typical low-ranking Kargat is a 3rd-level warrior, though their ranks also include fighters, rogues, assassins and even the occasional mage. The Kargat's leadership, roughly 10 percent of the total, comprises intelligent undead exclusively, primarily vampires and ghosts. Azalin uses his undead dominion to ensure their loyalty. The middle ranks are made up of lycanthropes and other shapechangers. Advancement through the Kargat often depends as much on what you are as on whom you know.



## Dominic d'Honaire, Darklord of Dementlieu

**Male human Arit0:** CR 10; SZ M Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 10d8; hp 57; Init +0; Spd 30;

AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk: +8/+3 melee (1d6-1, masterwork rapier), +8/+3 ranged (1d10, masterwork pistol); SA Domination, suggestion; SQ Immunities, repulsive; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +12, Handle Animal +11, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Listen +10, Ride +7, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10; Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Focus (rapier).

**Languages:** Mordentish\*, Balok, Falkovnian, Lamordian.

**Signature Possessions:** Masterwork rapier, masterwork pistol, amulet of natural armor +2, bracelets of armor +2 (as bracers), cloak of charisma +2.

A slightly portly gentleman in his mid-50s, Dominic has a somewhat elusive attractiveness. His features are soft and unremarkable, and the red hair that was so striking in his youth is receding and well on its way to going gray. His eyes, however, are a vivid, entrancing blue, and his face is so expressive that a simple smile can make him appear quite handsome. He wears his hair in a short ponytail and sports a trimmed beard and moustache.

## Background

Dominic was born in Mordentshire, where the d'Honaire were a long-established and respected family. His mother died after the long and stressful labor. Dominic was unusually intelligent and perceptive as a child; his observations of others gave him an excellent grasp of human interaction. His intelligence was matched only by mischievousness, and he used his talent for manipulation to malicious effect. With nothing more than subtle words, Dominic was able to set people against each other, delighting in every relationship he ruined. His appearance of youthful innocence kept anyone from suspecting his deviousness. With experience, his skill at subterfuge increased, and with it grew the chaos resulting from his deceits. Dominic was eventually able to manipulate people almost at will, artfully directing their actions with precisely worded suggestions that they thought were their own ideas.

When Dominic was seven years old, his machinations took a lethal turn. He developed a childish dislike for his new nanny, a young woman he found overly strict. Toying with her mind and destroying her relationships, he was able to send her into a deep depression; a few more nudging words were all it took to send her leaping off the Mordent cliffs.





and into the Sea of Sorrows. The Mordentshire constables found her sudden disappearance odd and began investigating. They never suspected her young charge, but Dominic still found their attention to the case disconcerting.

Coincidentally, around this time, Dominic's father decided it was time for the d'Honaire's to try a change of scenery and leave Mordent for the first time in uncounted generations. Of course, the idea was actually Dominic's, who not only sought to avoid the notice of the Mordentshire police, but also felt as though his destiny awaited him somewhere in the Mists. What he found there was the domain of Dementlieu.

Given an expansive new playground to enjoy, little Dominic took his games to a new and ambitious level. Seeking to build his power in this strange yet somehow familiar land, Dominic used his adult relatives as tools to build a network of wealth and influence. By the time he himself became an adult, Dominic's powers over the minds of others had developed to supernatural extents,

and there was little in Dementlieu he did not have influence over. By his late 20s, Dominic had become chief advisor to the lord-governor of Dementlieu, a position he has held ever since.

### Current Sketch

Dominic rules Dementlieu with whispers and nods. He is well respected and known as a man of great influence, but the only people with an inkling of how vast his reach extends are his Obedient, those he has brainwashed into complete servitude. The lord-governor of Dementlieu is one such Obedient, and every important decision the man makes actually comes from Dominic.

Dominic lives to manipulate others. He finds his power over others' wills to be intoxicating, and he often spins elaborate, complex plots for the sheer pleasure of doing so. Dominic has everything the average man could possibly want and pursues new intrigues more as a diversion than as a means to an end. Anyone who dares seek to unravel his cunning threads will provoke his wrath.

The only thing that rivals Dominic's love for intrigue is his interest in women. As a darling child, tragically deprived of his mother, Dominic was spoiled relentlessly by the women in his life and grew quite attached to this attention. Unfortunately, Dominic's womanizing impulses are doomed never to be satisfied. Ever since coming to Dementlieu, any woman Dominic finds attractive in turn finds him repulsive. The more attracted to her he becomes, the stronger her distaste for him grows. Even his mental powers are unable to mitigate this disgust. Dominic is highly frustrated by this phenomenon and even strangled his first love over it. It remains the only murder he has committed with his own hands.

### Combat

Dominic is not a skilled fighter; he prefers not to make enemies overtly, instead endeavoring to use proxies to eliminate those who displease him. In the event that he is faced with an attacker, d'Honaire will rely on his Obedient bodyguards, who are rarely far from his side.

**Special Attacks:** *Domination (Su)*: This ability is similar to a gaze attack, except that Dominic must take a standard action, and those merely looking at him are not affected. Anyone Dominic





targets must succeed at a Will save (DC 19) or fall instantly under Dominic's influence as through by a *dominate person* spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. The ability has a range of 30 feet. Creatures that fail three consecutive Will saves against this ability acquire the Obedient special quality (see sidebar).

**Suggestion (Ex):** Dominic can use *suggestion*, as the spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, merely by speaking to a creature. The target must succeed at a Will save (DC 19) to resist the suggestion. This ability is a mind-affecting, language-dependent compulsion.

**Special Qualities: Immunities (Ex):** Dominic is immune to mind-affecting effects.

**Repulsive (Ex):** Any female that Dominic finds attractive will perceive him to be hideous and despicable. With such women, Dominic is considered to have an Outcast Rating of 8, which can never be reduced.

## Cair

Dominic lives in a sumptuous mansion, not far from the lord-governor's palace. It is a beautiful and well-built estate, constructed by Dementlieu's finest architects and decorated by its finest artists. It is guarded by many of Dominic's Obedient, who defend their master at the expense of their own lives. The mansion is only a rank 1 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

When Dominic wishes to close his domain, a powerful mirage appears at the borders, reflecting the domain. A traveler at the border sees Dementlieu stretching out both before and behind her. If the traveler continues on into the mirage, she always finds herself journeying back into the domain. Even vessels sailing the Sea of Sorrows close to Dementlieu's shores are not immune to this effect.

## The Obedient

Creatures that fail three consecutive Will saves against Dominic d'Honaire's domination ability are enslaved to the darklord's will. Once the third save is failed, the creature acquires the Obedient special quality. Characters who attack an Obedient with knowledge that the creature is unwillingly enslaved may be subject to powers checks.

**Obedient (Ex):** The creature is permanently affected by Dominic d'Honaire's domination ability. The creature receives a +1 bonus to Will saves against mind-affecting effects from sources other than Dominic. This bonus increases by +1 for every year that the creature possesses the Obedient quality, to a maximum of +10. The Obedient quality is removed if the creature leaves the domain of Dementlieu or fails a save against a mind-affecting effect from a source other than Dominic.



## lad Drakov, Darklord of Falkovnia

**Male human Ftr16:** CR 17; SZ M Humanoid (6 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 16d10+48; hp 155; Init +1; Spd 20; AC 31 (touch 13, flat-footed 30); Atk: +25/+20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+11/17-20/x2, +3 *short sword*) or +21/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+3, +2 *mighty* [Str 18] *composite longbow*); SR 21; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +6, Craft (armorsmithing) +9, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +7, Jump +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +9, Ride +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Swim +12, Wilderness Lore +4; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Far Shot, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (short sword), Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Ride-by Attack, Trample, Weapon Focus (composite longbow, short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

**Languages:** Falkovnian\*.

**Signature Possessions:** +3 *full plate*, +3 *large steel shield*, +3 *short sword*, +2 *mighty* (Str 18) *composite longbow*, +1 *arrows*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *ring of freedom of movement*, *ring of protection* +2, *rod of flailing*.

Drakov is an intimidating presence. Ninety years old, he has the appearance of a man in his 50s and the vitality of a man in his prime. Tall, wide and heavily muscled, he carries himself with the arrogance of a born warrior. His skin is tanned, leathery and flecked with scars, and his features are sharp and predatory, particularly his piercing blue-gray eyes. His hooked nose gives him a hawk-like appearance. His brown hair is shoulder-length and disheveled, and his beard is long and streaked with gray. His symbols of office are a long, black cape trimmed with white fur and a thick black belt with a hawk's head buckle.







## Background

Drakov lived as a soldier of fortune in a distant land, leading a troop of mercenaries known as the Talon of the Hawk. The Talon was in high demand by the local kingdoms, in large part due to the leadership of Vlad Drakov, the Hawk.

Drakov was a competent tactician and a fearsome hand-to-hand combatant, but these abilities were not the largest factors in his success. Of greater value was his personal charisma, the uncanny knack he had for motivating his men. The Talons would do virtually anything for their commander, and the fervor with which they fought was often able to carry the day against superior numbers. Equally valuable was Drakov's sheer ruthlessness. Drakov campaigned not only to win, but to obliterate his opposition. He never took prisoners, instead executing fallen soldiers en masse. His favorite method of execution was impalement, and the Talon left virtual forests of the impaled in its wake. Drakov found the writhing of the dying

entertaining and often dined during these mass executions.

Although Drakov was highly respected, even revered, by the mercenaries at his command, he was not able to command the same respect from the rulers who employed his services. They found his talents and his willingness to commit atrocities on the battlefield in the name of victory to be quite useful, but they found the man himself to be unsettling at best and barbaric at worst. Even as they paid him to fight for them, the rulers publicly decried his brutality, keeping him at arm's length lest they be too closely associated with him. Drakov found this treatment demeaning and longed to have a land of his own to rule, to be respected as a man as well as a warrior.

One night, after Drakov and his men rode away from a helpless village they had just plundered for supplies, a fog seeped up from the ground and engulfed them. When it dissipated, they found themselves in an unfamiliar land: Darkon. Though confused by his newfound whereabouts, Drakov was excited by the prospect of new lands that he could conquer for his own. The first, and final, target of Drakov's first campaign in Ravenloft was a small village. His soldiers sacked it his command and, by his orders, impaled those folk who had dared to resist.

This time, however, Drakov's enjoyment of the slow deaths was spoiled by what happened afterward. The dead villagers were still for only moments before jerking back to a semblance of life. They pulled themselves off the sharpened stakes and flung themselves at Drakov's stunned warriors, while a second group of animated corpses appeared as if from nowhere and surrounded the mercenaries. Fighting in terrified desperation, Drakov and most of his men managed to battle their way free and fled into the Mists. There, they were met by the new domain of Falkovnia, which Drakov claimed for himself.

## Current Sketch

Despite having a land of his own to rule, Drakov has not found satisfaction. He does not receive the respect he has so long desired. His domain is nothing compared to Darkon in size or majesty, and his jealousy of that land and its wizard king runs deep. He has tried to invade Darkon numerous times, but the undead that rise to defend it make such campaigns fruitless. He has tried conquering other lands to expand his domain, but these efforts too have ended





in failure. Drakov is baffled by these difficulties; few of the surrounding domains have much in the way of standing armies, and his large and well-trained forces should be able to overrun them with ease, but something always manages to turn back his invasions. Drakov does not understand the nature of the Realm of Dread and does not realize that the powers of the darklords of the Core make his goals unattainable. Thus, he tries time and time again to expand his realm, and each failure makes him look more and more incompetent.

Drakov takes out his frustrations on the people within his domain, who are completely at his mercy. Drakov rules Falkovnia with systematic cruelty. His laws are oppressive and numerous, and his police force, the Talons, enforce those laws brutally. Most offenses are punishable by execution, with impalement the most common method. Drakov's love for the spectacle of slow death by impalement has not diminished over the decades, and he watches at least one execution every night, usually during his evening meal. His other favored diversion is hawking. He has a large number of highly trained hawks, and he dotes on them as if they were his children. They are the only creatures he feels any real affection for.

## Combat

Drakov is a terrible foe to face in personal combat. He is skilled in using most weapons, but he favors the short sword. He often fights from horseback and is an excellent archer.

**Special Qualities:** *Spell Resistance (Ex)*: Drakov cannot voluntarily lower his spell resistance.

## Lair

Drakov rules Falkovnia from his castle, Draccipetri. It squats on an island in the middle of the Lukar River. The walls of the castle are high and thick, and the only access is by a narrow and easily defensible bridge. It is well suited to stand against invasion, but such an invasion has never occurred. The daily, lingering deaths of Drakov's prisoners has transformed the entire castle grounds into rank 4 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

Drakov cannot close his borders through any supernatural means. When he wishes to seal his domain, he sends soldiers to patrol the borders. Provided one can outrun or outwit these sadistic and cunning men-at-arms, one can escape Falkovnia.

## The Talons

Only a handful of Vlad Drakov's soldiers possess the sufficient ruthlessness, determination and bloodlust necessary to become Talons. The few that undergo the Talons' mysterious initiation ritual emerge as changed men. Talons are always lawful evil and utterly loyal to Drakov. They have spell resistance 12 and receive a +2 morale bonus to Will saves against mind-affecting effects. They also receive a +4 competence bonus to Intimidate and Sense Motive checks and an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks against Falkovnians. The Talons' spell resistance and Will save bonus are supernatural qualities.



## azlik, Darklord of Hazlan

**Male human** Evo14: CR 15; SZ M Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 14d4+14; hp 63; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 20 (touch 17, flat-footed 16); Atk: +7/+2 melee (1d4, +1 dagger) or +12/+7 melee

(1d4-1, masterwork daggers); SQ Familiar (toad), spell sense, undying soul; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 21, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +15, Bluff +5, Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Scry +15, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +16 (+18 to learn Evocation spells); Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Empower Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

**Languages:** Vaasi\*, Abyssal, Balok, Darkonese, Draconic.

**Wizard Spells per Day:** 5/7/6/6/6/5/4/3. Base DC = 15 + spell level, 17 + spell level for Evocation spells. Prohibited Schools: Enchantment and Illusion.

**Spellbook:** 0—all; 1st—alarm, burning hands, enlarge, expeditious retreat, identify, magic missile, message, protection from good, shield, spider climb, unseen servant; 2nd—alter self, arcane lock, blindness/deafness, cat's grace, darkness, daylight, flaming sphere, knock, Melf's acid arrow, see invisibility, web; 3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball, fly, gaseous form, halt undead, lightning bolt, protection from elements, shrink item; 4th—arcane eye, dimension door, fire trap, ice storm, polymorph other, scrying, shout, stoneskin, wall of fire; 5th—cloudkill, cone of cold, lesser planar binding, magic jar, passwall, permanency, sending,





teleport; 6th—*Bigby's forceful hand, chain lightning, contingency, guards and wards, planar binding, true seeing*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball, forcecage, greater scrying, spell turning*.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 dagger, masterwork daggers, bracers of armor +3, gloves of Dexterity +2, headband of intellect +2, ring of protection +3, robe of resistance +2 (as cloak), wand of fireball (14th-level caster), wand of magic missile (14th-level caster).

An elderly, wizened man with coarse features, Hazlik is completely bald, with ornate tattoos taking the place of hair on his scalp. He wears a brown goatee, but not a mustache. His eyes are two different colors, the left one brown and the right one blue. He dresses in long red robes, leaving his chest exposed, which is as hairless and tattooed as his head. He always wears a silver pendant adorned with a yellow gemstone around his neck.

## Background

Frequently called the Red Wizard by the Hazlani, Hazlik hails from a distant land, an outlander kingdom ruled by mages. Hazlik was quite ambitious, normally an asset in the Byzantine system of his homeland, but he rose too fast and made too many enemies. Seeking to curtail his advancement, they captured Hazlik and tattooed his head and chest with arcane symbols of femininity. Humiliated and ostracized, Hazlik devoted himself to his magical studies, revenge never far from his mind.

As fate would have it, while searching the forests for arcane components, Hazlik stumbled upon one of his rivals, who was dallying with a lover. Hazlik ambushed the pair and slew them both, laughing as their blood ran. Mists rose to envelop him, and Hazlik became the lord of Hazlan.

## Current Sketch

Hazlik is infuriated by his captivity, as it prevents him from ever exacting his revenge on the wizards who humiliated him and drove him out. He has conducted innumerable magical experiments in the hopes of finding a means to escape Ravenloft, most of them conducted on unwilling subjects. None of them have been successful, and most have been fatal. Hazlik continues his efforts, but as he ages, his hopes for success are becoming quite dim.

For a long time, Hazlik brutally suppressed the practice of magic in his domain, intent on having no rivals to his power. Over time, Hazlik's attitudes have shifted, and he has taken apprentices as a means of expanding his own power base. Hazlik

acknowledges the possibility that he will never find his escape from Ravenloft and hopes that one of his apprentices will carry on for him after his death. Unfortunately, at heart, his apprentices are much like him and are far too concerned with their own welfare to spend their lives pursuing an old man's dreams of vengeance. While they can learn from him, they feign loyalty and obedience, but none will carry on his legacy when he passes. Hazlik is beginning to realize this and has placed all his hopes in a single student, a talented young Rashemani woman named Elena. Many Mulans have come to despise Elena for the special favor Hazlik shows her and spread jealous rumors about the exact nature of the relationship between Hazlik and his "pet."

Hazlik's dreams are haunted by images of the wizards who humiliated him. In these nightmares, he is powerless and cowers before their magical might. He fears and hates these dreams for reminding him of his failures and uses arcane concoctions to delay sleep as long as possible. With these potions, Hazlik need sleep only once every few days, but he constantly seeks more effective methods.

## Combat

Hazlik is no warrior, but his mastery of evocation makes him quite effective in battle. He seeks to end combats quickly and decisively, raining lightning, fire and frost down upon his foes. One or more of his apprentices is usually at his side, ready to come to his assistance.

**Special Qualities:** *Spell Sense (Ex):* Hazlik can automatically sense every arcane spell that is cast within Hazlan. When a spell is cast, Hazlik instantly becomes aware of the spell's school and the caster's location with a precision of 10 miles—the spell's level. For example, if a wizard cast *fireball* within Hazlan, Hazlik would know that an Evocation spell had been cast somewhere in a seven-mile radius of the wizard. Hazlik can precisely identify the spell with a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level), as if he were present to see or hear its verbal or somatic components.

*Undying Soul (Su):* Hazlik's amulet radiates a strong Necromancy aura when studied with *detect magic*, though the amulet is not truly magical and functions only for him. If Hazlik is slain, his soul is transferred to the amulet's gem. If a humanoid or monstrous humanoid touches the gem while it contains Hazlik's soul, the creature must succeed at

a Will save (DC 21) or be compelled to wear the amulet and defend it to the death. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect. Unlike the *magic jar* spell, however, *protection from evil* or a similar ward will not block the amulet's power. The amulet is not a cursed item and can be forcibly removed from a creature that wears it. Each time a creature sleeps while wearing the amulet, he must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or his own soul will be destroyed and replaced by Hazlik's soul. Once reborn, Hazlik has his original mental ability scores, skills, feats and abilities. Over the course of the next month, Hazlik's new body is slowly transformed to match his original physical ability scores and appearance.

### Cair

Hazlik resides in an estate north of Toyalis, known as Veneficus. At the center of the estate is a tall, blocky tower, known to the people of Hazlan as the Red Tower. Within its walls, Hazlik conducts his experiments and magical research. The tower is a symbol of fear and oppression to Hazlan's people, for few taken there make it out alive.

### Closing the Borders

When Hazlik wishes to seal his domain, a wall of fire leaps up at the borders of Hazlan. Creatures that touch the wall suffer 4d6 fire damage (no saving throw). Neither fire resistance nor fire immunity can protect a creature from these flames. Creatures that actually enter the wall of



Hazlik

fire, even those with fire immunity, continue to suffer fire damage each round until utterly destroyed, incinerated to fine ash. Only creatures of elemental fire can withstand the border's heat.

## **G**abrielle Hderre, Darklord of Invidia

Female Zarovan half-Vistana Sor11: CR 12; SZ M Humanoid (5 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 11d4; hp 39; Init +2; Spd 30; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk: +4 (1d4, +1 bane dagger [shapechangers]) or +8 ranged (1d4-1, masterwork dart); SA Gaze of the temptress; SQ Familiar (cat), fire-building, free of the *lunatio*, protected kin, Zarovan initiative bonus; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +6, Knowledge +8 (arcana), Knowledge (local) +5, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +8, Wilderness Lore +5; Extend Spell, Quick Draw, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Voice of Wrath.

**Languages:** Balok\*, Luktar, *patterna*.

**Sorcerer Spells per Day:** 6/7/7/7/6/4. Base DC = 13 + spell level, 15 + spell level for Enchantment spells.

**Sorcerer Spells Known:** 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, light, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*cause fear, change self, charm person, hypnotism, sleep*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, detect thoughts, scare, Tasha's hideous laughter, whispering wind*; 3rd—*dispel magic, hold person, major image, suggestion*; 4th—*charm monster, confusion, emotion*; 5th—*dominate person, hold monster*.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 bane dagger (shapechangers), masterwork darts, amulet of natural armor +1, bracelets of armor +2 (as bracers), kerchief of disguise (as hat), ring of protection +1, ring of spell turning, shawl of resistance +1 (as cloak), wand of charm person.

Gabrielle is an attractive woman who appears to be in her mid-20s. From her half-Vistana mother, she inherited her deep black eyes and her raven



hair, which is marred only by a single streak of gray. She inherited her pale, unblemished skin from her *giorgio* father. Despite her youthful appearance, Gabrielle is actually in her mid-40s. Her reflection in mirrors shows her true age, with her hair graying in multiple spots and her skin starting to wrinkle. Although her reflection is by no means unattractive, she finds it hideous and does all she can to avoid mirrors. Gabrielle favors her Vistani heritage in her dress, wearing brightly colored skirts and blouses and a great deal of jewelry.

## Background

Gabrielle is part Vistani, the daughter of a half-Vistani woman and a *giorgio* male. Born in Richemulot, she never knew her father. Her mother, Isabella, was an outcast thanks to her mixed blood, and together, the two wandered the Core, telling fortunes, begging and stealing in order to survive. Gabrielle learned much of the ways of the Vistani from her mother, including how to tell fortunes and cast simple spells, but Gabrielle was never able to learn from her mother what she most wanted to know: the truth about her father. All that Isabella would say of him is that he was a terrible, evil man and that Gabrielle carried a piece of that evil within her.

"You must never bear children," her mother once told her. "A man, a babe, a home — these things can never be for you, Gabrielle, because tragedy would be the only result." From a seer of her mother's skill, such a prophecy was tantamount to a curse. Gabrielle became bitter and resentful of her mother and of the lonely life that had been allotted to her. Gabrielle refused to accept what her mother told her of her father; as the one part of her life that remained a mystery, she saw him as her last chance at happiness.

When Gabrielle was 19, she and her mother were attacked by a lone werewolf. The werewolf severely injured Isabella, but Gabrielle refused to come to her mother's aid until Isabella told her who her father was. What Gabrielle learned destroyed her last hopes of a happy life. Isabella told Gabrielle that as a young girl, she had been sold into slavery in Falkovnia to a terrible man who delighted in cruelty. Many years passed before she could escape, and by the time she did, she was already pregnant with Gabrielle.

Gabrielle was devastated by the horrible truth about her father, but only briefly, as she quickly decided that Isabella must be lying. Taking her

mother's possessions with her, Gabrielle left Isabella to die under the werewolf's claws.

Gabrielle's treachery did not go unnoticed, however, and the Mists rose up to surround her as she fled. When they receded, she found herself in Invidia, a domain ruled by the cruel werewolf lord Bakholis. Bakholis' troops captured her and took her to their lord, who sought to enslave her just as her mother had been enslaved. However, Bakholis did not reckon with the power of Gabrielle's evil eye, and as he stood transfixed, she slit his throat with her silver dagger. With Bakholis' death, lordship of Invidia passed to Gabrielle.

Gabrielle amused herself over the years by taking lovers, often luring them away from committed relationships, dominating them thoroughly with her powers and then casting them aside when she no longer found them entertaining. These games did nothing to fill the loneliness in her, but she dared not seek out a true relationship; the words of her mother's curse haunted her constantly.

Eight years ago, Gabrielle was approached by a dark stranger, a man who utterly captivated her the moment their eyes met. She and this mysterious man spent only one evening together. The anonymous gentleman caller left, and she never saw him again. To this day, she has difficulty remembering their time together.

The results of that tryst, however, are vivid in her recollection, as, nine months later, she gave birth to a son she named Malocchio. At first, he appeared to be a perfectly normal, healthy baby boy, save for the sixth finger he had on each hand. Soon, however, it became clear that he was anything but normal. He grew unnaturally quickly and was walking and talking within days. With her powers of divination, Gabrielle was able to discern that Malocchio was, in fact, a Dukkar, a figure of legendary evil feared by all Vistani. Gabrielle was delighted by this discovery, for she hated the Vistani for casting out her mother and, by extension, herself. She saw Malocchio as the perfect tool of vengeance. Unfortunately, Malocchio had other plans. As clever and wicked as she was, Gabrielle was no match for her fiendish son, and his manipulations left her broken and nearly mad. He left her to suffer and, by now a fully functioning adult, set off to claim Invidia as his own.

Gabrielle was found by Matton, a wolfgone and one of her past lovers. She had rejected Matton when she discovered his true nature, but he had



never stopped loving her, and having found her, he slowly nursed her back to physical and mental health. Gabrielle soon found herself returning Matton's affections, and the two began making plans to defeat Malocchio and restore Gabrielle to her prominence in the domain.

To this end, Matton began recruiting wolfweres from Kartakass, while Gabrielle co-opted a rebel movement that sought to gain independence for the Invidian lands that had once been part of Gundarak. After a while, the rebels started to grow disenchanted with Gabrielle's leadership, as it became clear that she was more interested in her vendetta against Malocchio than she was in the Gundarakite cause. To secure their loyalty, she was forced to seduce their spokesman, Ardonk Szerieza, who now steadfastly supports whatever plans she makes. She has kept this affair a secret from Matton and has, in turn, kept her relationship with Matton secret from Ardonk. She cares nothing for Ardonk as a man, seeing him merely as a means to an end, and the necessity of betraying her love for Matton hurts her greatly. Still, it is a sacrifice she is willing to make.

Unfortunately, almost three years ago, the situation became quite a bit more complicated. Gabrielle became pregnant, despite her use of various herbs and potions to prevent such an occurrence. Her daughter, Lucita Aderre, is now two years old, and Gabrielle is unsure who the father is. Matton and Ardonk each believe themselves to be the father of the girl, and Gabrielle has found it quite difficult to keep them from becoming suspicious. Unfortunately, Gabrielle knows that it is only a matter of time before all is revealed. If Matton is the father, then Lucita is a wolfwere as well, and she should begin changing shapes within a year or two. If Ardonk is the father, she will never change, and Matton will know the truth. When the true father of the child is finally revealed, it is likely that Matton and Ardonk will seek to kill one another, and all Gabrielle's plans will lay in ruins. When she first found she was pregnant, she had naively hoped that this second child would be a chance to prove her mother's predictions wrong. Now, she has come to realize that Lucita is certain to create tragedy just as Malocchio has done.



Gabrielle Aderre

### Current Sketch

For a time, it appeared that Gabrielle was on her way to happiness. She had found love with Matton, and the loneliness that characterized so much of her life was fading. Now, with her mother's curse rearing its head once more, Gabrielle is sinking back into bitterness and rage. She has begun distancing herself from both Matton and Ardonk, partly to conceal the truth from them and partly to shield herself when the inevitable confrontation between the two finally occurs. She has flirted with the idea of divesting herself of both men, sending them to die against Malocchio while she seeks safe haven for herself and her daughter, but she has not yet committed to this plan. She still loves Matton, after all, and she is not yet willing to surrender Invidia to her son.

More than anything, Gabrielle loves her daughter. On some level, she hopes that Ardonk is the father; though she cares nothing for Ardonk, the



thought of her darling child as a werewolf is not a pleasant one.

## Combat

Gabrielle tends to rely on her minions to protect her in combat; Matton is particularly fearsome in his defense of her. She is not without her own capabilities, however, and will use the powers of her evil eye to deadly effect in support of her allies.

**Special Attacks:** *Gaze of the Temptress (Su):* Gabrielle can use any Enchantment spell that she knows in a manner similar to a gaze attack. To use a spell as a gaze attack, she must have at least one spell of the appropriate level readied for the day. Thus, if Gabrielle wants to use *hold person* as a gaze attack, she must have at least one 3rd-level spell readied. Using this gaze attack does not actually cast the spell. As long as Gabrielle still has one 3rd-level spell readied, she can use her *hold person* gaze over and over again. When used as gaze attacks, Gabrielle's spells do not require spell components. Gabrielle must take a standard action to use her gaze attack, and those merely looking at her are not affected. Anyone she targets must succeed at a Will save (DC 18) or be affected as though by the spell. These abilities are all as the spells cast by an 11th-level sorcerer. Gabrielle's gaze has a range of 30 feet.

**Special Qualities:** *Free of the Lunatio (Ex):* Gabrielle does not suffer from the moon madness that afflicts most half-Vistani.

*Protected Kin (Ex):* Gabrielle cannot directly harm anyone of Vistani heritage, whether they are full-blooded Vistani or merely a *giorgio* with a distant Vistani ancestor. She cannot attack such an individual, nor can she target them with her spells, unless the spell is harmless. She can, however, manipulate others — through mundane or magical means — to harm those of Vistani blood.

## Lair

Gabrielle currently resides in Castle Hunadora with the Gundrakite rebels. The castle originally belonged to Duke Gundar, the powerful vampire lord who ruled Gundarak until his demise, and the rebels have not yet explored it in its entirety. They are cautious when wandering it, but still, every so often, a new and deadly arcane trap is uncovered that takes a life or two before being dismantled. Under Gabrielle's direction, the rebels are laying traps of their own to fend off any attacks by

Malocchio's mercenaries. The castle was a rank 4 sinkhole of evil under Gundar's reign, but in recent years its evil has sunk to rank 2.

## Closing the Borders

When Gabrielle wishes to close her borders, an undetectable wall of terror surrounds Invidia. Creatures who cross the border become panicked (no saving throw) and must flee back into Invidia. Even creatures that are normally immune to fear or mind-affecting effects are not immune to this panic, though creatures without Intelligence scores are unaffected.



## Harkon Lukas, Darklord of Kartakass

**Male werewolf Brd8:** CR 13; SZ M Shapechanger (6 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 5d8+8d6+52; hp 118; Init +7; Spd 40; AC 25 (touch 16, flat-footed 22); Atk: +13 melee (1d4+4, bite), +13 melee (1d8+5, +1 *berserking longsword*) or +13/+8 (1d8, masterwork light crossbow); SA Alternate form, song of weariness; SQ Bardic knowledge, bardic music (inspire courage, countersong, fascinate, inspire competence), call to arms, damage reduction 15/cold iron, darkvision 60 ft., feral allies, master of the forest, undying soul; SR 13; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 22.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Gather Information +12, Hide +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Perform +14 (ballad, dance, epic, flute, harp, lute, melody, storytelling), Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Use Magic Device +12; Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Multiattack (despite only one natural weapon), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (longsword).

**Languages:** Kartakan\*, Balok, Sylvan, Vaasi.

**Bard Spells per Day:** 3/5/5/2. Base DC = 16 + spell level, 18 + spell level for Enchantment spells

**Bard Spells Known:** 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*charm person, hypnotism, silent image, sleep*; 2nd—*darkness, hold person, suggestion, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*charm monster, emotion, gust of wind*.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 *berserking longsword*, masterwork light crossbow, bracers of armor +3, cloak of charisma +2, ring of protection +3, wand of sleep.

Harkon Lukas is a werewolf, a shapechanging predator that takes humanoid form to lure in its prey. He has multiple forms, each of which he can take at will. His natural form is that of a large and fearsome dire wolf, but Harkon is unusual among werewolves in that he prefers to spend his time in humanoid form. As a humanoid, Harkon can imitate any race and either gender, but his appearance

from form to form is always similar. His aging has slowed to a glacial crawl since he was granted a domain.

His favorite form is that of a tall, muscular, human male. In this form, he has wavy black hair that falls below his shoulders, a well-trimmed beard and a moustache that comes to two very fine points. His clothing is always of high quality, usually consisting of a white shirt, blue trousers and a golden coat, topped off with a wide feathered hat. Harkon always wears a monocle, an unusual affectation as he has excellent vision, and always has a finely crafted harp and sword with him.

In his human female form, Harkon has the same wavy black hair and tends toward similar clothing. As a female, he is thin and athletic — and remarkably beautiful. In this form, he reluctantly eschews the monocle but retains the harp and sword.

Harkon's other commonly assumed shape is his hybrid form. Harkon becomes much taller and more muscular in this form, but he carefully selects loose clothing that can survive the change. His head becomes that of a snarling wolf, complete with terrible fangs, and his body sprouts a thick covering of fur.

## Background

Harkon hails from a distant land, where he was unusual among wolfweres in that he was a highly social creature. Wolfweres tend to be loners, with little patience for the company of others, but Harkon thrived on social interaction. His attempts to engage in discourse with his kind were always rebuffed, and Harkon found himself increasingly isolated. As an adult, he tried to overcome the solitary and chaotic impulses of his fellow wolfweres and unite them into a single, organized tribe, but his efforts failed disastrously, and Harkon was actively shunned.

Enraged by the foolishness of his kin, Harkon took his anger out on the innocent farmers of the surrounding lands, slaughtering dozens of humans before finally calming. Once his head cleared, he decided to abandon the wild and live as a man. Posing as a wandering minstrel, Harkon would satisfy his cravings, both social and murderous, among humans, visiting towns for pleasant discourse and slaking his hunger on travelers and loners. He found more happiness than he did



Harkon Lukas

among his own kind but still felt dissatisfied and unfulfilled.

One night, walking alone on a village road, Harkon settled on a purpose. He had failed to get his fellow wolfweres to submit to his leadership, so he resolved, instead, to bend these humans to his will. As dreams of conquest and power swam in his head, he barely noticed as a thick fog rolled in. Harkon found himself in a new land, Barovia, his plans for conquering the old land already rendered moot.

Frenzied by this strange and sudden turn of events, Harkon went berserk, hunting down and slaying the wolves that run thick in the Barovian forests. His depredations were eventually noticed by Count Strahd, who descended from his castle to confront the interloper. Harkon was nearly slain, but he managed to escape into the Mists and was rewarded with the domain Kartakass.





## Current Sketch

Harkon is bitterly disappointed with his domain. His desire is to rule a land of greatness, but Kartakass is little more than forest and small villages, and its people lack the desire to become anything greater. He finds himself as purposeless as ever — only this time, he has nothing more to aspire to. Harkon has settled for becoming the meistersinger of Skald, the most important political position in Kartakass, but he finds it so prosaic that he defends his title more out of territoriality than ambition.

Harkon is fiendishly clever and, unlike most wolfweres, is quite capable of planning for the future. He favors complicated schemes and prefers trickery to violence. His bestial nature is never far from the surface, however, and should his efforts be thwarted, he will erupt in a violent rage. These rages can last for days before he calms down.

When not in a rage, Harkon is an amiable sort, given to laughter, song and conversation. There's always a hint of mischief about him, as though he were enjoying a private joke.

## Combat

Harkon is a fearsome combatant regardless of the form he takes, though he prefers his powerful hybrid form in combat for obvious reasons. He is bold and fearless in melee, knowing that he can't be permanently killed.

Lukas' +1 *berserking longsword* was a "gift" from the Dark Powers, appearing in his hand when he became lord of Kartakass. It is a cursed weapon; whenever Harkon enters combat in humanoid or hybrid form, it appears in his hand no matter how far the distance between them and compels him to fight to the death. Once combat is begun, Harkon cannot change to wolf form until his enemies are dead. Harkon has adapted to this curse and often uses the sword's power to surprise his foes. His favorite trick is to give his sword to those he meets as a sign of "peaceful intentions"; should a combat start, it will immediately appear in his hand no matter what they might have done with it.

**Special Attacks:** *Alternate Form (Su)*: Lukas can transform into a dire wolf or a Small or Medium-size humanoid as though using the *polymorph self* spell. Changing forms is a standard action, and he can remain in any form indefinitely. Unlike a creature using the *polymorph self* spell, Lukas can use his supernatural abilities (including his song) when he assumes the form of a humanoid.

*Song of Weariness (Su)*: When Lukas sings, all creatures within a 90-foot radius must succeed at a Will save (DC 22) or be *slowed* for 1d4+4 rounds as the spell cast by a 6th-level sorcerer. If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by Lukas' song for one day. This song is a sonic, mind-affecting ability.

**Special Qualities:** *Call to Arms (Su)*: Lukas carries a *longsword* +1 with the rage curse of a *berserking sword*. He can summon this sword into his waiting hand as a free action. This ability functions regardless of the sword's current location or owner. Otherwise, the ability is similar to the spell *Drawmij's instant summons*, as though cast by a 14th-level sorcerer. Lukas' sword cannot be removed from the domain of Kartakass.

*Feral Allies (Su)*: Once per day, Lukas can call forth 3d4 dire wolves from Kartakass' wilds as a standard action by playing on his harp. The wolves arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Lukas for up to 1 day. This is a sonic ability.

*Master of the Forest (Su)*: Lukas can command any animal in Kartakass as the spell *dominate animal* cast by a 13th-level sorcerer. Using this ability requires no action on Lukas' part, the animal receives no saving throw, and the control lasts as long as the darklord wills it. The animal must be within 100 feet of Lukas for the darklord to establish control. All animals in Kartakass are under Lukas' influence.

*Undying Soul (Su)*: If Lukas is slain, his soul is instantly transferred into the body of the nearest dire wolf in Kartakass, regardless of distance. The dire wolf's spirit is snuffed out and replaced with the darklord's. The dire wolf's mental ability scores change to match those of Lukas, who retains all of his skills, feats and abilities.

## Cair

Though his position as meistersinger of Skald permits him use of the meistersinger's mansion, Harkon prefers to spend his time at the Old Kartakan Inn and Taverna, a popular place to dine and drink for the people of Skald. Unbeknownst to the people, Harkon is the owner of the inn, and after dark, he emerges from his private, secret room and opens the inn to an entirely different clientele. Wolfweres have made the inn a gathering place, and humans who stay too long are the house specialty. The not-infrequent murders committed in the back rooms keep the inn a rank 2 sinkhole of evil.





## Closing the Borders

When Lukas wishes to seal his domain, a gentle lullaby fills the air at Kartakass' borders. Creatures crossing the border fall into a deep sleep (no saving throw), only to awaken in 1d6 x 10 minutes a few feet inside Kartakass' border. Neither plugging one's ears or magical *silence* will

protect a creature from the song. Even deaf creatures, creatures that do not require sleep and creatures normally immune to mind-affecting effects, compulsions, enchantments and sonic effects hear the song and are affected by it. The song cannot affect creatures without an Intelligence score, however.



## Tristessa, Darklord of Keening

**Female sith rank five ghost Clrb:** CR 16; SZM Undead (incorporeal, shadow) (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 13d12; hp 102; Init +7; Spd Fly 30 (perfect); AC 15 (17 on Ethereal) (touch 15 [13 on ethereal], flat-footed 12 [17 on ethereal]); Atk: +10 melee (1d4 [1d4+1 on Ethereal] and withering touch) or +12/+7 melee (1d4, masterwork punching dagger) (Ethereal only); SA Aura of despair, corrupting touch, frightful moan, manifestation, rebuke undead, shadowform, spell-like abilities, spells, spontaneous casting, unnerving gaze, withering touch; SQ Damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 120 ft., immunities, incorporeal, rejuvenation, sense living, sun vulnerability, turn resistance +8, undead; SR 21; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +15; Str 12, Dex 17, Con —, Int 23, Wis 18, Cha 19.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +10, Bluff +13, Concentration +10, Hide +20, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +16, Listen +23, Move Silently +16, Search +23, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +16, Spot +23; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Expertise, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration, Weapon Finesse (punching dagger), Weapon Focus (punching dagger).

**Languages:** Sylvan\*, Abyssal, Draconic, Elven, Infernal.

**Cleric Spells per Day:** 5/5/5/4. Base DC = 14 + spell level. Deity: The Spider Queen. Domains: Evil (casts evil spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise and Hide are class skills).

**Wizard Spells per Day:** 5/7/6/4/3. Base DC = 16 + spell level.

**Spellbook:** 0—*disrupt undead*; 1st—*cause fear*, *chill touch*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd—*ghoul touch*, *scare*, *spectral hand*; 3rd—*gentle repose*, *halt undead*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*contagion*, *enervation*, *fear*.

**Signature Possessions:** Masterwork punching dagger, *shawl of resistance +1* (as cloak).

Tristessa appears as a floating, luminous spirit. Often called a groaning spirit or "banshee," Tristessa died in agony and will remain in that state forever. Her body writhes, and she wails constantly from the physical and emotional pain of her death. Her features are distorted by grief, and ethereal tears stream down her face. She cradles a bundle of bloody cloth in one arm, holding it like an infant. If an ethereal opponent somehow snatches the

bundle away from her, it falls open and empty with a puff of ghostly mist.

Tristessa was a shadow fey in life. She became a rogue priestess of the Spider Queen, and over the centuries, her body changed to resemble a drow elf, fooling more than one explorer. Her skin is pitch black, and when she moves, it glitters like a starry sky. Her eyes and fingernails are both midnight blue, and her wild tangle of hair is bone white.

## Background

Tristessa was a shadow fey, a member of the immortal race that once lived beneath the domain of Arak and now resides in the Shadow Rift. Not long after the domain of Arak formed, a trio of drow made their way to the shadow fey kingdom. Hungry for new experiences, the shadow fey accepted these exotic elves, and they soon rose to power in the Unseelie Court. The drow leader, an outcast cleric of the Spider Queen, introduced the shadow fey to the worship of her evil goddess. The original drow quickly killed each other off, but their faith continued to spread. After the death of the original drow cleric, Tristessa rose to prominence as the high priestess of the ever-growing cult.

Following the malevolent dictates of its goddess, the spider cult became decadent and depraved and grew increasingly brazen in its disregard of the Law of Arak. Over time, the spider cultists' bodies slowly transformed to resemble those of drow. Threatened by the cult's increasing power, Loht, the Prince of Shadows and leader of the Unseelie Court, took steps to stop the religion. Tristessa led her followers in a lengthy and bitter power struggle. For all the destruction caused and all the lesser creatures killed, not one drop of shadow fey blood was spilled in the conflict. Above all else, the millennia-old Law of Arak strictly forbade the killing of one shadow elf by another.

Tristessa's child, a twisted little creature resembling a drider, was born shortly before the Unseelie Court finally defeated her cult. To mark his victory, Loht and his warriors dragged the





captive Tristessa to the surface and, in violation of the sacrosanct Law of Arak, staked her and her deformed child to the slopes of Mount Lament, leaving them to boil away under the light of the sun.

When the sun rose, Tristessa and her child were consumed by the daylight. A sandstorm twisted to life from Tristessa's dying scream. It swept through the mountain valleys, wiping out all surface life. History would record the storm as the Scourge of Arak. When the dust settled, Mount Lament had been shifted to a new domain. The Mists had given Tristessa's spirit the small domain of Keening.

### Current Sketch

Tristessa's death and the loss of her child have driven her mad with grief. She constantly searches for her baby, destroying any living creatures she encounters. She does not seem to understand the passage of time. If she encounters living creatures, she demands the return of her child. She usually picks out one male humanoid and focuses her

demands on him, insistently calling her opponent by the name "Loht." If the creatures give Tristessa a live humanoid baby, she thanks them profusely and retreats to the mines of Mount Lament. If the creatures do not give her a baby, she destroys them.

If given a baby, Tristessa treats it as lovingly as her own child, but unconsciously uses her withering touch to give the baby the deformities she expects to see. Tristessa cannot care for a live infant, and it soon starves or dies of thirst.

### Combat

Tristessa despises the living and attacks them without concern for her own survival. She always attacks elves before any other creatures, since they remind her of the shadow fey that executed her.

**Special Attacks:** *Ghost Abilities:* The save DC against Tristessa's ghost abilities is 20.

*Shadowform (Su):* Tristessa can transform into a shadow as though using the *shapechange* spell. Changing forms is a standard action, and she can remain in her shadowform indefinitely.

*Spell-Like Abilities:* 1/day — *dancing lights*, *darkness* and *faerie fire*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 13th-level sorcerer.

*Spells:* Tristessa knows and can cast Necromancy spells as a 7th-level necromancer.

*Unnerving Gaze (Su):* Shaken for 2d4 rounds, 30 feet, Will save (DC 20).

*Withering Touch (Su):* In addition to the damage inflicted by Tristessa's corrupting touch, any living creature Tristessa touches must make a Fort save or have one limb warp and wither into a useless stump. The crippled limb causes the victim to suffer 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage and 1d4 points of crippled Dexterity damage. This damage only heals normally once the victim leaves Keening.

**Special Qualities:** *Immunities (Ex):* Tristessa has fire immunity. She takes no damage from steel weapons.

*Rejuvenation (Su):* If Tristessa is destroyed, she reforms in the mines of Mount Lament in 2d4 days. Some sages believe that the only way to lay the banshee to rest is to somehow truly reunite her with her child.

*Sun Vulnerability (Ex):* Tristessa takes 1d6 points of damage each round she is exposed to direct sunlight.





*Sense Living (Su)*: Tristessa continuously senses the presence and location of every living creature within Keening. This requires no action or concentration on her part. She receives no additional information beyond knowledge of the creature's presence in her domain.

## Cair

Tristessa can travel to anywhere in her domain, but she usually restricts herself to the maze of mine tunnels that riddle Mount Lament. Some of these tunnels are rumored to stretch all the way

down into the Shadow Rift. A pit somewhere in the mines contains the warped and tiny skeletons of dozens of infants sacrificed to Tristessa over the years. The tunnels surrounding this pit are a rank 2 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

When Tristessa wishes to seal her domain, a brutal, moaning wind whips about Keening's borders. The wind causes all creatures of all sizes to be blown away (no saving throw), rolling or blowing them back into Keening (see Table 3-17 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

## **D**r. Victor Mordenheim

**Male human Exp15**: CR 14; SZ M Humanoid (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 15d6-15; hp 54; Init +3; Spd 30; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atk: +12/+7/+2 melee (masterwork rapier) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (ld10, masterwork pistol); SQ Regeneration 5, undying soul; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 9, Int 20, Wis 8, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats**: Alchemy +18, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Disable Device +18, Handle Animal +13, Heal +17, Hide +10, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (nature) +19, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Ride +10, Search +18, Sense Motive +12; Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Expertise, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (rapier), Skill Focus (Heal).

**Languages**: Lamordian\*, Balok, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Mordentish.

**Signature Possessions**: Masterwork rapier, masterwork pistol.

Dr. Victor Mordenheim appears to be a man in his mid-30s, but he has not aged a day in the 72 years since Lamordia became a domain. He is tall, with a wiry, but not athletic, frame. His sharp, pronounced features hint at his aristocratic background. Although his face still appears young, the strain of his intense obsession with his work has prematurely grayed his hair. Only a few streaks of the original brown remain. A reclusive lifestyle and meager diet have given him a pale and anemic complexion. His eyes are tired and muddled. He rarely blinks and always seems preoccupied.

Victor is plagued by tension. The tendons on the back of his hands are always taut and raised, and the thin dry skin on his knuckles is as white as the bone it conceals. His lips never relax into a smile, and he has developed a facial tic. He always seems nervous, but when provoked, his agitation never rises to a true burst of anger. Instead, he trembles

quietly for a moment, and then, his composure returns.

Victor picked up a handful of minor deformities in his early life. He has a distinguishing scar on his forehead from when he tumbled from a tree at the age of 5. At the age of 10, he attempted to perform a simple medical experiment on the family dog. The bowl of wine he fed the hound failed to properly drug it, and it retaliated at the first incision, nearly tearing off Victor's left earlobe. Victor's father refused to have the lobe reattached in the vain hope that it would teach the young surgeon a lesson, and it remains missing. At the age of 23, Victor accidentally severed the tip of his left ring finger with a surgical saw. Victor still chides himself for this careless slip today.

Dr. Mordenheim wears the simple, practical woolen clothing popular in Lamordian fashion, eschewing the finery of others of his social station. In his lab, he dons a surgical gown to protect his garments from blood and other fluids. The only jewelry he wears is a gold ring bearing his family crest and a gold pocket watch and chain given to him by his wife.

## Background

Victor Mordenheim is a gifted scientist and surgeon. At an early age, following his mother's passing, he became obsessed with the pursuit of knowledge and developed a lasting animosity toward death. While other boys played simple games and then later played at love, Victor studied the sciences, both modern and arcane. He soon disdained magic, however, deeming it a "diversion from Truth."

At age 21, shortly after graduating early from medical university, Victor surprised his family and





handful of friends by marrying Elise von Brandthofen, the daughter of his biological chemistry professor. If not for Elise's own persistence and admiration for Victor, he would never have met her, much less married her. She was an unusual and intelligent young woman who shared Victor's interest in chemistry, though she could not match his passion. Victor's father died shortly before his son's graduation. After settling his father's estate, Victor possessed the wealth to pursue any of his interests.

Unfortunately, Victor and his wife soon discovered that Elise was barren and could not give him children. Within a few months, Victor launched his research into the resurrection — or more appropriately the creation — of human life. He eventually grew so obsessed with his experiments that he sent Elise away to live with her family until his work was done. After 13 years of research, he accomplished his goal, creating a monster from human flesh. Mordenheim discovered virtually every piece of the puzzle he pursued, modeling his chain reaction of cellular life on the tumors he had once observed in the corpse of a bear. Yet the actual spark, the true wonder of life, was not of his own accomplishment. He was dabbling in the work of the gods, so the distant gods of his world dabbled in his work in turn.

Victor neither worshiped nor believed in any power higher than man. He was a learned atheist with a strictly empirical worldview. If Victor revered anything, it was knowledge — particularly his own. At other times, the gods might have tolerated such blasphemy, or even protected him from his own ignorance and arrogance. Mordenheim, however, had become a festering sore to their sensibilities. So fierce became his desire to create life, so strong his denial of their existence and so frustratingly close was he to success, that the gods decided to grant his wish. They imbued his foul patchwork creation with a twisted and troubled soul, rife with evil intent. Then, the gods washed their hands of Victor's fate, leaving him and his dark mockery of creation to their own devices.

As the gods turned away, however, other forces turned to look. On the night the monster first drew breath, the Mists settled around Schloss Mordenheim in a kind of deathwatch, observing the progress of Victor and his monster. Victor summoned Elise home to share in his "victory." When the Dark Powers were satisfied that Mordenheim had relinquished all hope of redemp-

tion, the Mists drew Schloss Mordenheim and all of its inhabitants into the new domain of Lamordia. Victor never noticed the change in scenery.

Victor delighted in his creation, regarding "Adam" as the child he and Elise could never have, but Elise was repulsed. Adam did little to improve the situation, demonstrating an unnatural affection toward her. Two years later, in an attempt to both appease Elise and to provide Adam with a "playmate," Victor adopted a pretty, seven-year old waif whom they had found half starved in the streets of Ludendorf. Victor named the foundling Eva. Adam simply seemed to grow jealous of the attention Elise showered on the girl. As Adam's antagonism deepened, Elise threatened to take Eva and leave Victor forever if he did not stop using the girl in his attempts to encourage Adam's "social development." A wiser man might have heeded his wife, but Adam's education continued unabated.

One night soon thereafter, Victor's world came crashing down. Victor awakened to the sound of screams and rushed into Eva's bedchamber. The girl was missing, never again to be found. Victor found his wife's crumpled, mangled body in a heap beside the bed. The monstrous Adam loomed over her, holding a bloody scrap of Eva's nightgown. With a furious roar, Adam bounded off the high balcony and disappeared into the night.

Victor discovered that Elise was still clinging to life. It was clear that she would die within the hour unless drastic measures were taken. Victor now faced a new challenge: not creating the spark of life, but preserving it. He used the same machines he had used to create Adam to sustain Elise and started researching new methods to restore her health.

## Current Sketch

Lamordians dislike the reclusive Dr. Mordenheim. At best, they consider him an arrogant eccentric, but some claim that he is a fiendish madman. These folk fear him and credit him with both powers he does not possess and crimes he does not commit. It is true that Victor robs graveyard and haunts local hospices in search of fresh, feminine bodies. He may have even arranged a gentle death or two, using toxins that cause no pain and leave no trace. He does not kidnap specimens that are still warm, however — that is the work of his estranged creation, Adam. Lamordians seem strangely unaware that Victor should more than a century old by now.





Victor's days and many of his nights are still devoted to science and to restoring his wife. What little is left of Elise still breathes in Victor's laboratory. On the two brief moments that Elise has regained consciousness in the decades since Adam's attack, she has cried out for Eva and begged Victor to release her from her torment. Her heart continues to beat — but not of its own accord. She lives solely through the intervention of Victor's contraptions. The Dark Powers have also quietly ensured Elise's existence to prolong Mordenheim's suffering. With each year that passes, Victor must replace more and more of his wife's failing flesh with his machines.

Compelled by remorse, some sliver of love and what must truly be madness, Victor still seeks to restore his wife by creating a new body for her that will all but surpass perfection. He has experimented with many different methods of restoring Elise, from transferring her brain into a new living body to tissue regeneration to building a flesh golem body of surpassing beauty. All attempts have failed. Although he has never created another life on the level of Adam, his experiments have loosed new monsters into the world. The crime lord in Port-a-Lucine known only as "the Brain" is just that: a powerfully psionic human brain that engineered its own escape from Victor's lab.

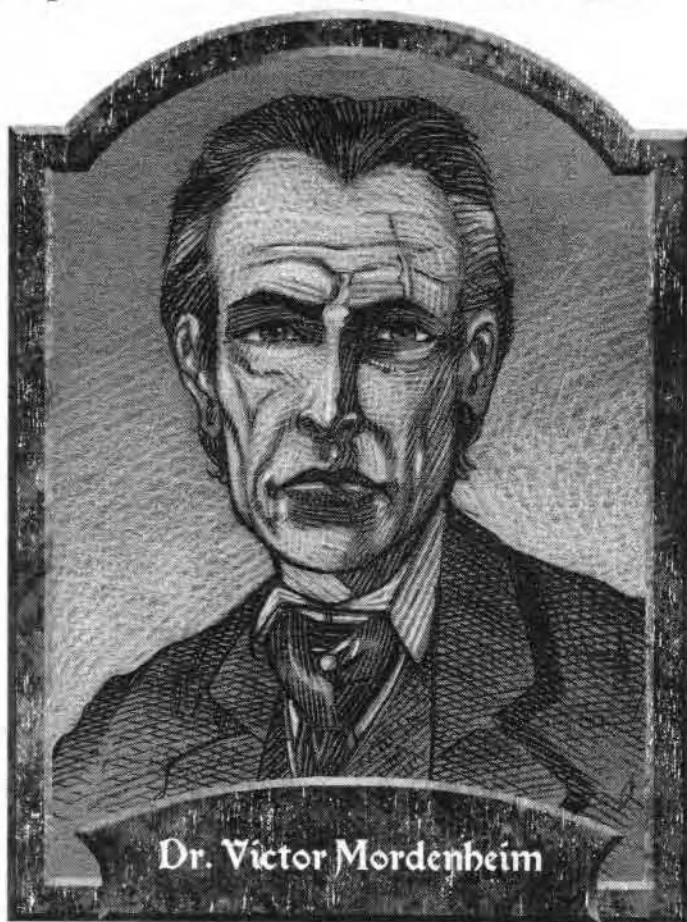
Barring the intervention of the gods that spurned him, Victor will never be able to restore Elise. Perhaps some part of him knows this. In his endless quest for perfect replacement parts, Victor can deny the truth: His life's work is a failure. Elise is lost to him forever, and he is as much her murderer as the wretch that struck her down.

## Combat

Dr. Mordenheim is an untalented combatant and is unlikely to start a fight. Due to his link to Adam, he cannot die unless Adam dies with him. Even with this immortality, Victor still feels the pain of any wounds he suffers and tries to avoid coming to harm.

**Special Qualities:** *Regeneration (Ex):* Acid and fire deal normal damage to Mordenheim.

*Undying Soul (Su):* If Mordenheim is slain and his body completely destroyed, his soul is instantly transferred into the most recently deceased male human corpse in Lamordia, regardless of distance.



The corpse is instantly restored to life, and its ability scores change to match those of Mordenheim, who retains all of his skills, feats and abilities. Over the course of the next week, Mordenheim's new body is slowly transformed to match his original appearance.

## Cair

Dr. Mordenheim resides in Schloss Mordenheim, a towering manor built atop cliffs overlooking the Sea of Sorrows. The Isle of Agony is plainly visible to the west. The manor is not large, and Mordenheim lives here with only the remains of his wife and whatever assistants he has managed to procure. Many rooms contain advanced machines Victor has created to further his experiments, including life-support systems and even a large electrical generator, a marvel of the modern age. Elise's endless suffering ensures that Schloss Mordenheim's sinkhole of evil never drops below rank 2.





## Mordenheim's Monster (Adam), Darklord of Lamordia

**Dread Flesh golem:** CR 15; SZ L Construct (8 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 14d10; hp 94; Init: +3; Spd 30 (can run); AC 26 (touch 12, flat-footed 23); Atk: +16/+16 melee (2d8+7, slam); SA Berserk, improved grab; SQ Construct, damage reduction 15/+1, darkvision 60 ft., magic immunity, regeneration 5, telepathic bond; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 24, Dex 17, Con —, Int 16, Wisdom 12, Charisma 3.  
*Skills and Feats:* Climb +11, Hide +11, Jump +11, Listen +5, Move Silently +1, Spot +5.

*Languages:* Lamordian\*, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Mordentish.

From a distance, Mordenheim's creation appears to be a towering and powerfully built man, his body well muscled, his limbs well proportioned. Adam's raven hair grows long and wild, flowing halfway down his back. Upon closer examination, one discovers that Adam is a patchwork of body parts stolen from different human corpses. A jigsaw of angry raised scars crisscrosses his physique. Each piece of Adam's body is perfect. As a whole, they become grotesque.

Adam's skin is pale, gray and too thin to conceal the play of muscles and arteries beneath. His skin grows bluish and shriveled at the edges of his eyes and mouth. Thin, straight black lips frame his perfect, pearly white teeth. His watery blue eyes gleam with unexpected intelligence, but they seem to be loosely anchored in their sockets, his eyelids scarcely able to cover them.

### Background

Dr. Victor Mordenheim created Adam from the body parts of many dead men and gave him life. Much of Adam's history is given under Dr. Mordenheim's background but, perhaps unsurprisingly, Adam and his creator seldom agree on the exact details of their shared history.

Adam insists that he came into the world as an innocent and that his love for Elise was pure, despite her revulsion. If he is cruel, then it was Mordenheim that made him so. The fateful night that Adam became the darklord of Lamordia forms their greatest bone of contention. Adam claims that the girl Eva had come to accept him, no longer seeing him as the scarred freak Mordenheim had made him to be. Adam chose to leave Schloss Mordenheim and decided that he would make a better guardian for the foundling than the squabbling Mordenheims.

He crept into Eva's bedchamber to tell her of his plans and have her gather up her things, but he accidentally frightened her by looming over her as she woke. Adam placed a hand over her mouth to stop her from screaming — and that is how Elise found them when she burst in a moment later, wielding an ornamental pike. Adam tried to explain himself, but Elise attacked him. As Adam pulled away, Eva fled at a full sprint out onto her balcony, where she lost her footing and tumbled over the edge. Horrified, Adam lunged to her aid. Thankfully, he discovered that the girl was dangling just out of sight, her nightgown snagged on the balcony's broken railing. Adam reached down to rescue Eva, grabbing her by one wrist. Just as Adam was going to pull the girl to safety, Elise stabbed him again with the pike. Startled by the pain, Adam's grip slackened. Eva's arm slipped away. All Adam drew back was the girl's torn nightgown. Adam flew into a mad rage, attacking Elise with all his fury, and that is how Mordenheim found him. Adam leapt from the balcony not to escape Mordenheim's rage, but to throw himself into the sea. When he woke the next morning, having washed up on shore, Adam knew that destroying himself was beyond his power.

Adam's tale likely presents him as more innocent and noble than he really is, just as Mordenheim describes him as the rampaging monster he is not. Regardless of the truth, Adam became the darklord of Lamordia for maiming Elise. The land welcomed him.

### Current Sketch

Adam is the most powerful being in his domain. Lamordians know him as a vague monster of legend. Many believe that he is nothing more than a bogeyman in a tale told to frighten naughty children. He has no contact with Baron von Aubrecker, Lamordia's political ruler.

Adam lives as a recluse on the Isle of Agony. The cold and whipping winds cause him no discomfort, and he has little need for food or water. Adam can live as freely and wildly as any animal, but he does not want to be a beast. He wants to be treated as a man, not a monster. His hunger for acceptance runs deeper than even he is willing to admit, but it is his curse to never find it. Adam is bitter and frustrated by his lot in life, and sometimes, his emotions boil up into acts of violence and evil. When faced with hostility, Adam often reacts with mad rages. If treated politely and without pity, however, he often returns the favor.





Adam despises Dr. Mordenheim and spends much of his existence plotting to make his creator miserable. He often sabotages Mordenheim's work when he fears that the doctor might be too close to restoring Elise. At the same time, he never tries to end Elise's life, despite knowing what torture her existence must be. Adam can never bring himself to physically harm his creator, however. The Dark Powers have bound them together in both body and spirit. Adam feels Victor's physical pain, and the doctor, in turn, shares his monster's eternal anguish.

### Combat

When in battle, Adam quickly dispels any notions his opponents may have of flesh golems as slow, lumbering automatons. He is swift, nimble and clever and a master of using Lamordia's harsh natural terrain to his advantage. Adam prefers to use guerilla tactics rather than frontal assaults, picking off his foes one by one. Should a battle turn against Adam, he will retreat to plan a fresh attack. Time is meaningless to an immortal construct, and he can always strike again another day.

If attacked with magic, Adam may pretend to be harmed by ineffectual spells to lull his opponents into a false sense of security — then strike when their defense drops.

**Special Attacks:** *Berserk (Ex)*: Like most flesh golems, Adam has a chance to go berserk, though the rampage ends naturally after 2d6 rounds. Victor Mordenheim cannot attempt to calm or control Adam when he is berserk.

**Special Qualities:** *Magic Immunity (Ex)*: Unlike most flesh golems, Adam is not slowed by cold effects. He is immune to cold damage. Furthermore, all spells that target Adam (other than those with fire and electricity effects) cure him of one point of damage per spell level.

*Regeneration (Ex)*: Acid and fire deal normal damage to Adam.

### Lair

Adam lurks alone on the Isle of Agony. His presence has led many Lamordians to call the shunned island "the devil's domicile." Adam can walk across the channel to the mainland at low tide or when the channel ices over during the winter. Although the Isle of Agony is also home to a few



other monstrous denizens, Adam has little contact with any of them. Adam calls a series of caves on the island's seaward side his home. These caves can only be accessed by swimming 425 feet up a frigid underground river, or by descending a 200-foot-deep natural chimney (Climb DC 20). Adam's home contains few creature comforts, just his small collection of books and mementos of Elise, stolen long ago.

### Closing the Borders

When Adam wishes to seal his domain, an unrelenting blizzard whips up at Lamordia's borders, even during the middle of summer. The blizzard causes all creatures of all sizes to be blown away (no saving throw), rolling or blowing them back into Lamordia (see Table 3-17 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Creatures that manage to somehow stand up to the winds and march into the blizzard vanish forever, devoured by snow, sleet and unholy cold.







## Frantisek Markov, Darklord of Markovia

**Male unique shapechanger Exp 7:** CR 10; SZ L Shapechanger (8 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 7d6+14; hp 45; Init +6; Spd 30, climb 30; AC 14 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk: +10/+10 melee (1d6+5, claws), +5 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Create broken ones, the thousand forms; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort+5, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Skills: Alchemy +13, Bluff +9, Handle Animal +9, Heal +12, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Sense Motive +10, Wilderness Lore +10; Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Heal).

**Languages:** Balok\*, Mordentish, Tepestani, Vaasi.

**Signature Possessions:** Silvered dagger, robe of resistance +1 (as cloak).

Frantisek Markov appears to be a massive, lumbering man with thick bones, a massive gut, visibly bowed legs and arms that seem to be too long. He has broad features in a round face and green eyes. He is slightly more than 70 years old, and though he remains physically powerful, his once-black hair has gone nearly white. His hair is straight, and he wears it slicked back. He often flashes a broad, toothy grin and has taken to presenting himself as a friendly old hermit, but his smile is threatening and predatory. He dresses from head to toe in loose black or white robes. He usually adds a necklace of humanoid and animal teeth when interacting with his broken ones.

### Background

The Markov family lived in Barovia long before the coming of the Tergs. A few of Frantisek's ancestors died in the massacre at Castle Ravenloft, and the remainder fled to the relative safety of Vallaki. Frantisek was born on a pig farm outside Vallaki, surrounded by the sloping Svalich woods.

Frantisek butchered the farm's swine to take to market in town. He showed an early talent for butchery and enjoyed his work. When he came of age, Frantisek married Ludmilla, a kind-hearted and zaftig woman from town. He moved into Vallaki and opened a butcher shop there. Although his business was successful, Frantisek soon grew bored with simple slaughter. At first, he merely studied the inner workings of the livestock he carved up. As time passed, he began to experiment on the animals, attempting to perform surgical amputations, grafts and glandular injections. His subjects always died within a few days, but the hobby cost

him nothing. After all, he could still sell the ground meat.

It wasn't long before Ludmilla discovered her husband's grisly pastime. She was horrified and disgusted. She threatened to leave Frantisek and reveal his monstrous activities to the entire village, including the nature of the meat he had been feeding them. Furious at her betrayal, Frantisek made sure she never reached the door. Ludmilla lived for three days after Markov was done with her. The villagers found her on the outskirts of town. At first, they thought they had discovered a demon, but eventually they deduced the truth. The villagers exiled Frantisek to the World's-End Mists, and the domain of Markovia appeared to accept him.

### Current Sketch

The Dark Powers have granted Markov the ability to perfect his work. He can operate on creatures to create men from beasts, to combine aspects of different species or to add bestial attributes to human subjects. His results are seldom perfect, but most subjects live, becoming broken ones. Markov has created scores of broken ones through the years, and the misshapen creatures have even started to forge their own primitive society. Broken one culture is based on their observations of human behavior. Markov himself is viewed as a fearsome deity, both creator and destroyer. In their pidgin tongue, they call him Diosambler: "The god who walks among us."

For all that the Dark Powers gave Markov, they have also cursed him terribly. Markov must always possess the body of bestial creature. He can change his body to that of any animal, but he can never assume a humanoid form. Markov usually assume the body of a gorilla to take advantage of its man-like shape. Markov considers himself to be hideously deformed and is desperate to restore his humanity. He continues his experiments on animals, seeking to create broken ones that appear perfectly human and then, somehow, to use those techniques on himself. He will never succeed. He spends long hours in his lab, vivisectioning animal subjects and transforming them into more broken ones.

Both human and animal subjects have been in short supply since Markovia shifted to the Sea of Sorrows, but the arrival of explorers or would-be colonists occasionally provides him with a fresh supply. Frantisek enjoys human company and of-





ten entertains his visitors for several days before subjecting them to the knife. He is a talented painter and enjoys painting portraits of his guests. He has a poor eye for human anatomy, resulting in stiff and awkward figures, but his paintings often seem to capture the subject's inner, primal nature.

## Combat

Markov does not consider himself a violent man, but if pressed into combat, he lashes out with his powerful gorilla arms or transforms into more fearsome animal forms. If possible, he prefers to send his broken ones to fight in his place.

**Special Attacks: Create Broken Ones (Ex):** Markov can transform any Medium-size or Large animal, beast or humanoid into a broken one (see **Denizens of Darkness**). The creature must be helpless, and Markov must devote at least eight hours a day to the meticulous surgeries that the transformation requires. The process takes 3d6 days, after which the creature emerges as a broken one. Creatures rescued after the transformation has begun but before it is complete suffer 1d4 permanent Constitution drain each day they are out of Markov's care.

**The Thousand Forms (Su):** Markov can transform into any Medium-size or Large animal (except dire animals) as though using the *polymorph self* spell. Changing forms is a standard action, and Markov can remain in any form indefinitely. Markov does not have a "normal" human form; the statistics above reflect the ape form he typically takes. In a grotesque twist, Markov always retains his human head in every animal form. Thus, he never receives a bite attack or special attacks related to bite attacks (such as a viper's poison), the low-light vision or scent special qualities or racial bonuses to Listen or Spot. Markov can choose to retain his human hands in any animal form, in which case he does not have claw attacks.

## Lair

Markov lives in a small, simple manor with a handful of broken ones created so skillfully that they are nearly indistinguishable from actual humans. The manor is built from thick timbers with a tightly thatched roof. Although the construction



appears crude, the building is quite sturdy and thoroughly capable of withstanding the Sea of Sorrows' erratic weather. One wing holds Markov's inelegant laboratory. When Markov creates a new broken one, the manor temporarily rises to a rank 3 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

When Markov wishes to close his domain, brutal winds whip up along Markovia's coast and schools of ravenous sharks gather just offshore. The winds cause creatures of all sizes to be blown away (no saving throw), blowing them back into Markovia (see Table 3-17 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Creatures that manage to overcome the winds somehow must contend with towering waves that can crush galleys and sharks up to Gargantuan size.





## ord Wilfred Godefroy, Darklord of Mordent

**Male human rank four ghost Ar12:** CR 16; SZ M Undead (incorporeal) (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 12d12; hp 94; Init +4; Spd fly 30 (perfect); AC 16 (17 on Ethereal) (touch 16 [12 on Ethereal], flat-footed 16 [17 on Ethereal]); Atk: +9 (+8 on Ethereal) melee (1d4 [1d4-1 on Ethereal], touch) or +9/+4 melee (1d6 and Charisma damage, +1 club) or +10/+5 ranged (1d12, masterwork musket) (Ethereal only); SA Charisma drain, corrupting touch, horrific appearance, malevolence, manifestation, phantom shift; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal, rejuvenation, turn immunity, undead; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 11, Con —, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 25.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Handle Animal +15, Hide +8, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11, Listen +20, Ride +8, Search +20, Sense Motive +12, Spot +20; Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Intimidate, Sense Motive).

**Languages:** Mordentish\*.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 walking stick (club), masterwork musket, amulet of natural armor +2, bracelets of armor +3 (as bracers), ring of protection +2, scarf of charisma +2 (as cloak).

As a ghost, Lord Godefroy appears as the translucent figure of a stocky, stooped man in his 70s. His face is deeply lined, with his brows knitted together and his cold eyes squinting harshly. His gray hair is tightly pulled back and worked into a complex knot at the back of his head. His expression is always authoritarian and unforgiving, and his mouth often tugs into a frown. Godefroy wears a high-necked, ruffled shirt and a close-fitting black coat with tails — the prevailing aristocratic fashions in Mordent some 200 years ago. He often wears pince-nez fastened to his coat by a chain, along with a few other tasteful items of jewelry. The darklord always carries his walking stick, an ebony cane topped by a silver griffon's head.

### Background

Gryphon Manor was evil from the day it was built, nearly 600 years ago. The Mordentish folk claim that madness was mixed into its mortar. The explorer and adventurer Renier, who first settled what would become Mordentshire, built the house for himself and all his descendants. Within the year, Renier and his family fled the house with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. As the centuries passed, the House on Gryphon Hill gained a reputation as a "bad house." Those who moved in would slowly and inevitably go mad,

growing suspicious of and spiteful to everyone around them.

For centuries, the pattern remained the same. Gryphon Manor would sit shunned and vacant for a decade or two, and then, new tenants would move in, scoffing at the old tales. Within a year, they would flee the house, swearing never to return.

Lord Godefroy inherited Gryphon Manor roughly 200 years ago. Like many before him, he dismissed the house's reputation and moved in. Unlike those prior tenants, he found the manor to his liking. In 566 BC, he married Estelle Weathermay, who was barely 16 and five decades his junior. Two years later, Estelle gave birth to their only child, a daughter they named Lilia. Godefroy found the girl a disappointing heir, to say the least. Always a bitter and domineering man, he slowly convinced himself that his child bride was unfaithful and had somehow betrayed him by denying him a son. In 578 BC, he murdered Estelle in a fit of rage, beating her to death with his walking stick. When Lilia attempted to save her mother, Wilfred turned his fury on her as well.

In the four centuries that the house had stood on Gryphon Hill, no inhabitant had ever actually taken a life. Godefroy's murders woke something in the house that has never returned to its slumber. Godefroy escaped mortal justice, even shooting his best stallion to provide a scapegoat, but the house knew what he had done. The night after Estelle and Lilia were buried in the cemetery on the Gryphon Hill grounds, their spirits returned to haunt their killer. The ghosts returned to torment Godefroy every night for the rest of the year. Finally, facing another year of nightly torture, Godefroy committed suicide on New Year's Day in 579 BC. In accordance with his will, Godefroy was interred in the Weathermay mausoleum near Heather House, far from his wife and child.

Godefroy had not yet drawn the attention of the Dark Powers, and his spirit haunted the mausoleum uneventfully for several months. During that time, however, an alchemist came to Mordentshire, moving in to Gryphon Manor despite the warnings of the locals. In October of that year, the alchemist activated his Apparatus at the same moment Azalin and Strahd opened a portal into material Mordentshire. The region was wrenched into Ravenloft, and chaos ensued. After the alchemist was slain and Strahd and Azalin retreated, the



Dark Powers chose Godefroy as the new master of Mordent.

Godefroy reveled in his newfound powers and freedom for a full day. His delight ended that night, when his wife and daughter returned.

### Current Sketch

Godefroy is a peevish, arrogant and conceited snob. He continually seethes with barely contained contempt for the incompetence he sees in everyone around him. He has a hair-trigger temper and often vents his rage in creatively evil ways. Godefroy considers himself the only and ultimate master of Mordent, though he usually simply ignores the living inhabitants. Godefroy forces the lesser spirits trapped in Gryphon Manor (see Lair below) to spend their afterlife as his menial servants. Cringing geists are stationed in each room of the manor to perform minor chores and maintenance. Godefroy beats these spirits mercilessly if they make errors, blind to the fact that many of his servants' mistakes stem from their overwhelming terror of his displeasure.

Over a decade ago, a band of adventurers entered Gryphon Manor with the intention of wiping out the evil at its heart. Godefroy slew them all but not without effort. Shocked by their sudden assault, Godefroy ventured out to spy on Mordentshire's living folk. To his surprise, Godefroy discovered that the adventurers had spent weeks in town, making their plans quite public. He retreated to the manor, pondering how to prevent future surprises. After a time, he hit upon a solution. Mordentshire's current mayor, Daniel Foxgrove, had married into the Weathermay family, and his wife Alice had died in 731 BC giving birth to twin daughters, Laurie and Gennifer. Godefroy discovered that Alice's shade was one of the many spirits in his manor. Godefroy appeared to Mayor Foxgrove that night and recruited an unwilling mortal spy. Daniel Foxgrove now serves as Godefroy's eyes and ears in town, reporting on suspicious activities. When Foxgrove produces useful information, Godefroy return his wife to him for one night. Foxgrove knows that if he withholds information, his wife's spirit will suffer terribly for it. He fears the day when his adventurous daughters decide to investigate the manor and he is forced to choose which loved one to betray.



Lord Wilfred Godefroy

Godefroy fears only one thing in all of existence — the nightly visits of his wife and daughter. His special attacks and qualities are useless against these vengeful spirits, and they tear at his incorporeal flesh as though he was still alive. For all his power during the day, Godefroy spends the majority of every night in hideous agony, listening to his wife and child curse him for their murders. When the spirits retreat at dawn, Godefroy vents his frustration on the first creature he comes across.

### Combat

Godefroy delights in his ghostly powers and prefers to use his walking stick against the dead and the living alike. If opponents flee his home, Godefroy may feign that he is anchored to the manor, only to invisibly follow the intruders to their homes and strike when they least expect it.

**Special Attacks:** The save DC against Godefroy's ghost abilities is 23.



**Charisma Drain (Su):** Any living creature or ghost struck by Godefroy's walking stick suffers 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain as Godefroy literally beats it into submission. A ghost drained below the minimum Charisma for its rank drops to the next rank it does qualify for. Weakened ghosts return to their original rank if they somehow recover their Charisma. Godefroy cannot drain any victim below 1 point of Charisma, however, and, thus, cannot beat ghosts out of existence, regardless of how often they test his patience.

**Special Qualities:** *Rejuvenation:* If destroyed, Godefroy reforms in 1 day. Godefroy cannot be permanently destroyed until Gryphon Manor is torn down and its stones scattered.

*Turn Immunity (Ex):* Godefroy cannot be turned.

## Cair

Most Mordentish believe that Godefroy is bound by the wall of Gryphon Manor, but he can roam freely throughout Mordent. He seldom leaves Mordentshire or its surroundings, however, and usually leaves Gryphon Manor only to check on his remains in the family's mausoleum.

Gryphon Manor is considered a vortex of evil in many Mordentish legends. Funereal traditions include practices to ensure that spirits do not linger after their death and become trapped. Ethereal creatures in Mordent must make a Will save or be involuntary drawn into the manor. The DC to escape the manor's pull is 30 within the manor walls and drops by 1 for each increment of 1,000 feet between the subject and the manor. Thus, an ethereal creature 10,000 feet away would have to make a Will save of DC 20 or be sucked in. (At distances beyond 30,000 feet, the manor's pull is easily ignored.) Ghosts add their rank as a morale bonus to this saving throw. Ethereal creatures must make this Will save once a day. Godefroy is exempt from this effect, and he can exempt other ethereal creatures by giving them verbal permission to leave. Gryphon Manor is a rank 5 sinkhole of evil. Rank 1 geists skulk in every nook and cranny of the manor, hopelessly trying to avoid provoking Godefroy.

## Closing the Borders

When Godefroy wishes to close his domain, the Mists rise at the borders of Mordent. Travelers by land or sea who enter these roiling vapors always find themselves returning to Mordent, regardless of their bearing.

## **M**alken (Sir Tristen Hiregaard), Darklord of Nova Vaasa

**Male human Ftr10 (Tristen) or Rog10 (Malken):** CR 11; SZM Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall as Tristen, 5 ft. 8 in. as Malken); HD 10d10+10 (10d6+10 as Malken); hp 79 (56 as Malken); Init +7; Spd 30; AC 21 (touch 14, flat-footed 18); Atk: +18/+13 (+17/+12 as Malken) melee (1d8+9 [1d8+7 as Malken], +4 *defending longsword*), +14/+9 ranged (1d6+4, mighty [Str 16] composite shortbow); SA Sneak attack +5d6 as Malken; SQ Fractured soul, plus ancestral curse, evasion, slippery mind, uncanny dodge as Malken; AL LN (CE as Malken); SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6 (Fort +5, Ref +11 as Malken); Str 17, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats (as Tristen):** Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +12, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +6, Ride +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6; Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Quick Draw, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail, longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

**Skills and Feats (as Malken):** Appraise +9, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +10, Forgery +9, Gather Information +11, Handle Animal +8, Hide +10, Innuendo +9, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Pick Pocket +10, Ride +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Tumble +10; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quick Draw.

**Languages:** Vaasi\*, Balok, Darkonese.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 studded leather, +2 buckler, +4 *defending longsword*, mighty (Str 16) composite shortbow, +1 arrows, ring of protection +1, scarf of resistance +1 (as cloak), vest of escape.

The Dark Powers have slowed Sir Tristen Hiregaard's aging. He is nearly a full century old, but he appears 30 years younger and remains as active as a man half his age. He is tall and muscular, and his dusky skin is hard and lined like leather. He wears his hair long; once jet-black, it is now streaked with gray. He waxes the ends of his thick black moustache into stiff points. Sir Tristen has a stern demeanor, but compassion flickers in his dark eyes.

Tristen dresses in the loose, comfortable fashions of Nova Vaasan nobility. He often wears tall black riding boots over black trousers, matched by a bright red shirt. He wears a yellow neckerchief, embroidered with red and black horses. Additional scarves, these marked with diagonal bands of black and red, are tied around his upper arms. He dons armor only when expecting trouble.

Tristen's alter ego Malken scarcely resembles him, even possessing a different height and hunched build. Malken's clean-shaven face is hideously misshapen and scarred by sores, his teeth are nar-



row and sharp, and his hair and thick brows are pure white. Malken's voice changes as well, and he often peppers his comments with obscenities. Malken tailors his fashions to whatever schemes he is currently engaged in. When entertaining himself with a simple murder, he wraps himself in a dark cloak. When dealing with underlings, Malken favors exotic and artistic papier-mâché animal masks.

## Background

Tristen Hiregaard was born on an outlander world, in the Principality of Vaasa. He was the son of Sir Romir Hiregaard, an aristocratic knight who taught Tristen the arts of horsemanship and combat. Romir also taught his son his nation's rigid codes of conduct concerning both the battlefield and the interaction of nobles and the peasantry.

Romir Hiregaard was a fair ruler and a caring father, but he was an insanely jealous husband, flying into a rage if he merely imagined his wife with another man. When Tristen was 10, Romir caught his wife in the arms of another man. In the heat of passion, he drew his sword and slew them both. Only later would he discover that the man had been a tutor teaching his wife a new waltz for an upcoming ball. With her dying words, Romir's wife cursed him. From that day on, he would kill any woman he loved and any man who crossed him.

Unable to bear his crimes, Romir took his own life, and his wife's powerful curse fell to their son Tristen. The curse slept for the next five years, until Tristen fell in love with a peasant girl who worked as a servant in his household. Tristen murdered the girl after their first kiss. Since young Tristen was the head of a prominent noble household, the crime was quickly hushed up, but it left Tristen badly shaken. Despite his honest and compassionate nature and despite the remorse he felt afterward, he had, in the heat of the moment, enjoyed killing the girl. Unaware of the curse over his head, Tristen began to doubt his own sanity. By the time six years had passed, Tristen had murdered nine more women. Despondent, he chose to end his life as his father had done.

It was not to be. Before Tristen could kill himself, the Mists swept him into a new realm. It resembled his outlander homeland, but it was sub-



tly changed. It was a fresh start—it was the domain of Nova Vaasa. The Dark Powers granted independent life to Romir's curse, creating a murderous alter ego. Tristen's alter ego named itself "Malken" after the tavern where he chose his first victim.

Tristen was knighted by the acting prince, Kethmar Bolshnik, and the two men soon became fast friends. Meanwhile, Malken gained a reputation as a sadistic "signature killer," prowling the alleys of Kantora and writing taunting messages to the authorities in his victims' blood. Sir Tristen became an officer in the Kantora city constabulary, heading the investigation to hunt down the killer. The cat-and-mouse games between these sworn foes would captivate Nova Vaasan gossip for decades to come. Even as Tristen tried new methods of trapping the elusive killer, Malken expanded to new, more elaborate crimes.

In the 70 years that have passed since Sir Tristen and Malken began their duel, Tristen has served two terms as the Prince of Nova Vaasa.



Meanwhile, Malken expanded from simple murder to ever more elaborate crimes, establishing a wide-spread criminal empire in Nova Vaasa's seedy slums. Tristen has been married and widowed twice. Malken murdered Tristen's first wife and the son she bore him. Tristen later wed Katya Chekiv, a loveless political marriage designed to strengthen their two households. Malken ignored Katya as much as Tristen did, and she bore him four sons. The eldest three, Yorgi, Sasha and Myar, are all middle-aged. Katya died eight years ago giving birth to their fourth son, Mikhail.

In 729 BC, Kethmar Bolshnik died shortly after assuming another term of office. At Kethmar's dying request, Sir Tristen served as the young Prince Othmar's regent. Othmar, however, was no innocent. He had secretly poisoned his father, and when his five-year term elapsed and Tristen stepped down as regent, Prince Othmar refused to relinquish his title. Although Sir Tristen does not respect Othmar Bolshnik as a man, he feels that it is his duty as a noble to serve his prince, and thus, he refuses to participate in the other families' continual machinations to remove Othmar from the throne. Malken admires Othmar's methods and knows enough of his secrets to render him highly vulnerable to blackmail, so the crime lord covertly supports Othmar's illegal regime whenever he can.

Ignoring politics as much as he can afford to, the aging Sir Tristen has spent most of the past 20 years once again focusing on the hunt for Malken. Malken too seems to be returning to his roots, stalking and killing the young women Sir Tristen romances.

### Current Sketch

Sir Tristen has retired from his post as chief officer of the Kantora constabulary, but he remains a prominent political figure. As the head of the Hiregaard family, he controls and exacts tribute from the farmlands along the Dnar River and the city of Liara, as well as the stone quarries of the Kosha Bluffs. Bound by strict codes of noble conduct and the edicts of the Church of the Lawgiver, Sir Tristen collects every copper of the taxes his peasants owe, though, unlike most of the other families, he never resorts to brutal collection methods. While some commoners hail Sir Tristen as a champion of the people, others despise him for his support of the crushing Bolshnik regime.

Despite his passionless marriage to Katya, Sir Tristen has always been a ladies' man — even something of a womanizer, entertaining numerous trysts during his life. Although Sir Tristen treats these women as well as could be expected, Malken has always taken a particular delight in delivering a horrifying death to them. Even the survivors of Malken's attention seldom escape without lasting scars.

Tristen has always suffered from the mad rages brought on by Romir's curse, but when a rage threatened to overtake him, he would have his guards lock him in a high tower in Castle Faerhaaven. Through this method, Tristen believed that he had been able to prevent tragedy for nearly 70 years. Roughly a decade ago, however, Sir Tristen finally made the horrifying discovery that he and his despised archenemy were one and the same. When the rages came, Sir Tristen would transform into Malken, who could then easily escape the castle to engage in his foul crimes. Sir Tristen has no memory of his time as Malken.

Malken is the true darklord of Nova Vaasa, not Sir Tristen. He despises having to share his body with his "weaker half" and maintains the impossible wish of ridding himself of his alter ego. In the meantime, he entertains himself by matching Tristen's life point for point: a crime for each honorable deed, a murder for each love. Malken knows that Tristen has started researching arcane methods of dispelling Malken, and he knows that Tristen is nowhere near success.

### Combat

Sir Tristen is an experienced warrior, having spent most of his life as a knight in service to the Othmar line. He is as comfortable fighting on horseback as on foot. He is an honorable combatant, though he is not so naïve as to expect the same of his opponents.

Malken, of course, is entirely the opposite. When attacking helpless victims, he prefers to strangle them with his bare hands (inflicting grapple damage). Against more worthy foes, he relies on poison and roguish trickery. If possible, Malken will send his underlings to test opponents' capabilities before facing them himself.

**Special Qualities:** *Fractured Soul (Ex):* When Tristen becomes enraged or overcome with jealousy, he will involuntarily transform into Malken as a full-round action in 3d6 rounds. Malken is identical to Tristen except in the following re-





spects: class, alignment, hit points, attack bonuses, saving throws, skills and feats. Malken transforms back into Tristen as a full-round action in 2d10 hours. Malken can also revert to Tristen at will, if he wishes. Tristen will also transform into Malken if he is affected by the *hate* or *rage* forms of the *emotion* spell. If Tristen is examined with *true seeing*, he appears as Malken; conversely, if Malken is examined, he appears as Tristen.

**Ancestral Curse (Su):** If Sir Tristen dies, the Malken curse will jump to his eldest son, Yorgi. This new "Malken" will adapt to Yorgi's personality, and its first crimes will likely be the murder of Yorgi's wife. Should Yorgi then die, the curse would be transferred to Sasha, then Myar and then to little Mikhail. Should all of Sir Tristen's sons die, the curse will leap to the eldest of his grandsons. Only by slaying all of Sir Tristen's male descendants can Malken — and perhaps Romir — finally be laid to rest.

## Lair

Sir Tristen Hiregaard and his family live in Castle Faerhaaven, their ancestral home. The castle is located a few hours' ride northwest of the city of Kantora.

Malken is reputed to possess a lair he mockingly calls "Darkhaaven." This maze of subterranean chambers is said to have no fixed location, appearing beneath any Nova Vaasan city at Malken's command. Likewise, the exact layout of Malken's sanctuary is said to subtly adjust to suit his moods. Darkhaaven rises to a rank 2 or 3 sinkhole of evil when Malken is "entertaining guests," but since the lair only exists when Malken is active, it often slips back to rank 1.

## Closing the Borders

Unlike most darklords, Malken cannot seal his domain. The struggle within his soul prevents him from exerting his influence over the land.



## acqueline Renier, Darklord of Richemulot

**Female human wererat Ari6/Rog5:** CR 14; SZ

M/S Shapechanger (5 ft., 5 in. tall in human or hybrid form, 2 ft. long as rat); HD 6d8+5d6+33; hp 90; Init +3 (+6 as rat or hybrid); Spd 30 (40, climb 20 as rat); AC 19 (20 as rat or hybrid) (touch 14 [17 as rat or hybrid], flat-footed 13 [17 as rat or hybrid]); Atk: +11/+6 melee (1d6+1, +1 rapier) or +12/+7 ranged (1d10+2, +1 pistol) or +11 melee (1d6+1, +1 rapier), +8 melee (1d4, bite) as hybrid or +10 melee (1d4 bite) as rat; SA Alternate form, sneak attack +3d6, plus curse of lycanthropy as rat or hybrid; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., evasion, gaseous form, monophobia, spider climb, uncanny dodge, plus damage reduction 15/silver, gnaw, rat empathy, scent as rat or hybrid; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +9 (Fort +10, Ref +13 as hybrid, Ref +12 as rat); Str 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 17 (Dex 22, Con 18 as rat or hybrid). **Skills and Feats:** Bluff +11, Climb +7 (+21 as rat or hybrid), Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +10 (+13 as rat or hybrid), Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +10, Hide +11 (+14 as hybrid, +18 as rat), Innuendo +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +11 (+14 as rat or hybrid), Ride +10 (+13 as hybrid), Search +13, Sense Motive +7, Spot +11, Tumble +10 (+13 as rat or hybrid); Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Improved Control Shape, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (rapier).

**Languages:** Mordentish\*, Balok, Falkovnian.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 rapier, +1 pistol, +1 bullets, bracers of armor +3 (as bracers), dress of resistance +1 (as cloak), ring of protection +1.

In her human form, Jacqueline is beautiful, with a slight feral hint to her features that gives her a vague exotic appeal. Her hair is deep black, with streaks of gray at the temples, which are actually quite flattering on her. Her green eyes are flecked with gold and seem to glitter when the light hits them just so. Her other forms, those of a dire rat and a human-rat hybrid, are considerably less attractive. She can also take the form of a cloud of odiferous mist.

## Background

Jacqueline Renier is a true wererat, as are all those who are Renier by blood. The Reniers came to Ravenloft when Jacqueline was just a child, chased through a misty portal by a group of monster-hunters. They arrived in Falkovnia and lived in the city of Silbervas until Drakov's Talons finally forced the Reniers out. They were herded into the Mists, where her grandfather Claude became darklord of the new domain of Richemulot.

Jacqueline and her twin sister Louise were well mentored by their evil and treacherous grandfather and constantly competed for his attentions. Though the sisters were well matched, Jacqueline proved time and again to be the superior in wit and strength. Still, despite her superiority, she was never able to win her grandfather's outright approval. The old wererat ruled his family by guile as much as by force and carefully maintained his







Jacqueline Renier

position of dominance in Richemulot by leaving his kin constantly seeking, but never fully receiving, his favor. It worked for over three decades.

Unfortunately for Claude, Jacqueline grew tired of jumping through his hoops. She ended the game by murdering him in 726, and control of Richemulot passed to her. She has continued her grandfather's system but has improved upon it by murdering any Renier who she feels might someday rebel against her. Strangely, though, she has allowed her greatest rival, her twin sister Louise, to survive, perhaps fearing loneliness more than she does Louise.

### Current Sketch

Controlling and cruel, Jacqueline delights in causing others pain, be it emotional or physical. She has manipulated and browbeaten most of the Reniers into submission and is feared by all, even those few who quietly seek to overthrow her. Her

one redeeming feature is her capacity to truly love, an unusual trait for a wererat; unfortunately, this invariably results in more pain for her than it does pleasure. Jacqueline is cursed to always assume her rat form in the presence of those she loves. She has long been smitten by a human named Henri DuBois, who vanished years ago after she unsuccessfully tried to infect him with lycanthropy. Where he is now is a mystery. Her unrequited love, combined with the pack mentality of wererats, gives Jacqueline a crippling fear of being alone, and she will always seek company whenever possible. For her, even the company of those she hates is preferable to loneliness.

### Combat

Jacqueline prefers to soften up her foes by setting her minions upon them, be they swarms of rats or a band of her kindred wererats. She has no fear of combat, though, and will gleefully assault her foes in rat or hybrid form so long as she has allies at her side and is certain she has the upper hand. If overwhelmed or confronted while alone, she will take her gaseous form and seek to escape.

**Special Attacks:** *Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):* The DC to resist lycanthropy contracted from Jacqueline's attacks is 20.

**Special Qualities:** *Alternate Form (Su):* Like most natural lycanthropes, Jacqueline has the Improved Control Shape feat and, thus, nearly perfect control over her transformations. She is cursed, however, to automatically transform into rat form when in the presence of anyone she truly loves (no check allowed).

**Gaseous Form (Su):** As a standard action, Jacqueline can assume *gaseous form* at will, as the spell cast by a 11th-level sorcerer. She can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 with perfect maneuverability.

**Spider Climb (Ex):** Jacqueline can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

**Gnaw (Ex):** Jacqueline can use her bite attack to strike objects. Her bite always ignores an object's hardness, inflicting normal damage to even the most resilient materials.

**Monophobia (Ex):** Jacqueline becomes shaken when she is not in the presence of allies, whether she is facing opponents without her fellow wererats or simply in room by herself.





## Lair

Chateau Delanuit, located in Pont-a-Museum, is the home of Jacqueline and her sister Louise. It belonged to their grandfather Claude before them and looks as though much of it has not been tended since he was a child. The plants are thick and overgrown, and most of the rooms are filled with dust and cobwebs. As wererats, the Renier sisters are not discomfited by such an environment, but their own quarters and those rooms of the estate likely to be seen by visitors are kept spotlessly clean by Jacqueline's few servants.

## Closing the Borders

When Jacqueline wishes to close her domain, thousands upon thousands of rats swarm forth and gather at Richemulot's borders. Though these creatures can be killed, two appear for every one that is slain. Flying creatures, even those with natural flight ability, find their power will fail them if they attempt to soar over the vermin. Creatures foolish enough to willingly wade into the squealing throng are devoured in moments, down to the last drop of blood and sliver of bone.



## Azrael Dak, Darklord of Sithicus

**Male hill dwarf werewbadger Ftr10:** CR 12; SZ M/S Shapechanger (4 ft. 1 in. tall in human or hybrid form, 7 feet long as badger); HD 10d10+54; hp 104; Init +7 (+10 as badger or hybrid); Spd 20 (20, burrow 10 as badger or hybrid); AC 15 (21 as badger or hybrid) (touch 13 [16 as badger or hybrid], flat-footed 12 [15 as badger or hybrid]); Atk: +18/+13 (+20/+15 as hybrid) melee (1d8+9 [1d8+11 as hybrid], +3 *speed battleaxe*) or +14/+9 (+17/+12 as hybrid) ranged (1d8, masterwork light crossbow), or +16/+16 melee (1d4+6, claws), +14 melee (1d4+3, bite) as badger or hybrid; SA Alternate form, *animate dead*, spread the rage, plus curse of lycanthropy, rage as badger or hybrid; SQ Badger empathy, chemical bane (poppy seed), darkvision 60 ft., dwarven traits, the hunger, plus damage reduction 15/silver, scent as badger or hybrid; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +8 (Fort +17, Ref +10 as badger or hybrid); Str 19, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12 (Str 23, Dex 22 as badger or hybrid).

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +2, Climb +5 (+7 as badger or hybrid), Craft (trapmaking) +6, Intimidate +4, Jump +6 (+8 as badger or hybrid), Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +10 (+14 as badger or hybrid), Search +4 (+8 as badger or hybrid), Sense Motive +3, Spot +10 (+14 as badger or hybrid); Back to the Wall, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Courage, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Control Shape, Improved Initiative, Jaded, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*battleaxe*), Weapon Specialization (*battleaxe*).

**Languages:** Dwarven\*, Balok, Sithican.

**Signature Possessions:** +3 *speed battleaxe*, masterwork light crossbow, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Azrael is brawler, his body heavily muscled, yet nimble. Balding on top, he has foregone the traditional dwarven beard for bone-white mutton-chop sideburns that meet as a mustache. The skin on the left side of his face and running down his left arm and chest is puckered with scars from an old electrical burn. His voice is a rumbling growl, and his eyes bulge with feverish madness. Azrael's man-

nerisms often make him appear to be on the verge of a violent rampage — and he often is. Azrael cares little for fashion, usually wearing dark and repeatedly patched clothes. One item he always wears is his chain of office, bearing a rose of black iron.

As a werewbadger, Azrael can also take the form of a dire badger or a monstrous dwarf-badger hybrid.

## Background

Azrael was born on a distant world, in the dwarven city of Brigalure. Unlike his peers, Azrael demonstrated no talent for dwarven crafts, and he proved too lazy to overcome his incompetence. Unable to master his parents' crafts, Azrael could not be considered an adult. This brought shame upon his family, and his parents' continued attempts to teach him their trade merely resulted in expensive accidents.

At last, unable to bear his parents' tirades, Azrael decided to leave Brigalure forever — but they refused to let him go until he had paid for the damages he had caused. Azrael snapped, and in a rampage, he slaughtered his entire family. His mother's screams drew constables, and Azrael was forced to flee. A mob of dwarven locals came to the constables' aid, cutting off Azrael's escape. Finally, wounded and cornered, Azrael sank into unconsciousness.

When Azrael awoke, he found himself alone, somewhere in the endless maze of lightless tunnels that surrounded the city. He had been banished. Completely lost, he started to panic — but then he heard a voice. To Azrael, it was as if the smothering darkness itself was speaking to him. The dark promised to grant Azrael life and power, on the condition that he would destroy Brigalure. Azrael





**Azrael Dak**

accepted, and his body wrenched itself into a new shape: He had become a werewolf.

Using his heightened senses, Azrael found his way back to the dwarven city. For the next 50 years, he preyed upon its inhabitants. Eventually, Azrael realized that he had at last found his true calling: murder.

One day, while Azrael was tracking yet another victim through the tunnels, a strange mist billowed from the stone. When it parted, Azrael found himself in Forlorn. He wandered the lands of the southwestern Core for several months, learning the lay of the land. In 720 BC, Azrael was briefly captured by a band of Barovian peasants who tried to burn him for his crimes. After Azrael killed the last of them, he discovered that his slaughter had an audience: a glowering, undead blackguard and his captive Vistana, Magda Kulchevich. The blackguard was an outlander like himself but had only just arrived in the Land of Mists. Sensing the villain's power, Azrael joined him as a guide, serving him for the security he provided. When the

blackguard entered the Mists and became the darklord of Sithicus, he made Azrael the seneschal of his keep, Nedragaard.

Azrael served as the blackguard's emissary for more than 30 years. He used his master's fearsome reputation to bolster his own, earning the nickname "the Sorrow of Sithicus." As time went on, however, Azrael's loyalty waned. Following the tremors of the Grand Conjunction, Azrael discovered a subterranean pool of liquid darkness far beneath a salt mine he oversaw. Once again, the darkness whispered to Azrael, revealing the secrets of any creature in the domain and promising him future glory. Azrael came to see that the blackguard had retreated into numb despair and that the darkness was preparing to become the new master of Sithicus. The darkness taught Azrael a rite that would give him control of every shadow in Sithicus and advised him on how best to wield its power.

Four years ago, Azrael started conspiring with Inza Kulchevich, the power-hungry and treacherous daughter of his master's most prized captive. Azrael believed that Magda was the only person capable of thwarting his treason, and Inza sought to assume her mother's role as *raunie* of their small tribe. Azrael then furthered his treachery. He secretly approached Malocchio Aderre and plotted with him to sow the seeds of the blackguard's destruction. Once his master was gone, Azrael would, at last, assume control of the domain. As payment, he would deliver all of his master's captive Vistani to the Dukkar's tender mercies.

Azrael's plans came to fruition in 752 BC on the heels of Magda's murder. As an army of Invidian mercenaries distracted the blackguard at his castle, Azrael performed the rite. The shadow of every living creature in the domain tore away from its moorings and poured into the Great Rift beneath Nedragaard. Then, as a single roiling mass, they rose up to shatter the keep and all who stood within it. This event is now called the Night of Screaming Shadows. The darkness sank back into the rift, and from there, the shadows returned to their owners. The blackguard was erased from his own domain, and to this day no Sithican will speak his name for fear of calling him back from whatever abyss claimed him. Inza Kulchevich, cornered that night by the kin she had betrayed, denied them their vengeance by throwing herself into the flowing shadows of the Great Rift.





## Current Sketch

The shadow rite proved too much for Azrael to control, driving him to the brink of madness. The darkness no longer cajoles him with promises of power. Now, it speaks the truth, mocking him as the puppet he has always been. Azrael knows that he is not the darklord of Sithicus. He knows that Inza has assumed that title, though she has yet to emerge from the Great Rift. Azrael knows that Inza has merged with the darkness; in his less lucid moments, he believes that she has *always* been the darkness.

Azrael has declared himself the new ruler of Sithicus, but his control is crumbling. The Sithicans are slowly coming to terms with the blackguard's apparent demise. As they do so, they are slowly realizing that for all his sadism, Azrael is just one dwarf with a dwindling force of hired killers. Increasingly desperate, Azrael now continually races through Sithicus on a chariot decorated with elven bones, quashing one uprising after another with acts of astounding cruelty.

## Combat

Azrael is a vicious and sadistic combatant. He hurls himself fearlessly into close combat to rattle his enemies. Many opponents have been fooled into thinking that Azrael is little more than an unsubtle berserker. If he intends to kill a foe, Azrael usually shifts to hybrid form. If opponents demonstrate that they can actually cause Azrael serious harm, he immediately becomes much more cautious and reveals a cunning, tactical mind. Azrael shifts to his badger form and burrows to retreat if necessary. If opponents best Azrael once, they can rest assured that he will return with reinforcements.

**Special Attacks:** *Animate Dead (Sp)*: Once per day, Azrael can cast *animate dead*, as the spell cast by a 9th-level cleric. The undead blackguard Azrael once served gave Azrael this power as a boon for his service.

**Rage (Ex)**: Azrael can use the dire badger's rage ability whenever in badger or hybrid form.

**Spread the Rage (Su)**: When a non-evil creature touches Azrael's battleaxe, she must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or pick the weapon up and go berserk, as a *berserking sword*. The axe does not function as a *berserking* weapon in Azrael's hands.

## Cair

Azrael has claimed the cracked ruins of Nedragard as his home, but he seldom visits. The ruins are still haunted by phantoms, some of which remind Azrael of his former master. The domain's simmering political unrest offers Azrael little rest, and he travels frequently.

## Closing the Borders

Azrael cannot close the borders of Sithicus. The true darklord, Inza, has not yet revealed herself, and the borders have not closed since she inherited the domain.



## The Three Hags, Darklords of Tepest

### Laveeda

**Female annis Sor6**: CR 13; SZ L Monstrous Humanoid (8 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 7d8+6d4+65; hp 127; Init +4; Spd 40; AC 28 (touch 15, flat-footed 24); Atk: +15/+15 (1d6+7, claws), +10 (1d6+3, bite); SA Improved grab, rend 2d6+14, shapechange, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Cauldron of life, darkvision 60 ft., enemy of light, familiar (owl), hideous, keen scent, mimicry, telepathy, steely skin; SR 19; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 25, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats**: Bluff +7, Concentration +10, Disguise +7, Heal +7, Hide +9, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +14, Move Silently +10, Scry +5, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +9, Spot +8; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item.

**Languages**: Tepestani\*, Draconic, Goblin, Sylvan.

**Sorcerer Spells per Day**: 6/7/6/4. Base DC = 14 + spell level.

**Sorcerer Spells Known**: 0—*daze, detect poison, detect magic, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*enlarge, shield, shocking grasp, unseen servant*; 2nd—*glitterdust, summon swarm*; 3rd—*lightning bolt*.

**Signature Possessions**: *Bracelets of armor* +3 (as bracers), *hag eye, ring of protection* +2, *shawl of charisma* +2 (as cloak), *wand of summon swarm*.

### Leticia

**Female sea hag Sor10**: CR 15; SZ M Monstrous Humanoid (4 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 3d8+10d4+65; hp 119; Init +4; Spd 30, swim 40; AC 22 (touch 16, flat-footed 18); Atk: +12/+12 (1d4+4, claws); SA Evil eye, horrific appearance, shapechange, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Cauldron of life, darkvision 60 ft., enemy of light, familiar (toad), hideous, mimicry, telepathy,



water breathing; SR 21; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +12; Str 19, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +5, Concentration +9, Disguise +5, Heal +4, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Scry +5, Search +3, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +5, Spot +8; Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Scribe Scroll.

*Languages:* Tepestani\*, Sylvan.

*Sorcerer Spells per Day:* 6/7/7/7/5/3. Base DC = 13 + spell level.

*Sorcerer Spells Known:* 0—arcane mark, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance; 1st—chill touch, identify, obscuring mist, reduce, sleep; 2nd—blindness/deafness, darkness, ghoul touch, whispering wind; 3rd—sleet storm, slow, vampiric touch; 4th—enervation, ice storm; 5th—feeblemind.

*Signature Possessions:* Bracelets of armor +3 (as bracers), hag eye, ring of protection +2, shawl of charisma +2 (as cloak), wand of slow.

## Corinda

**Female green hag Sor4:** CR 10; SZ M Monstrous Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 9d8+4d4+65; hp 131; Init +4; Spd 30, swim 30; AC 30 (touch 16, flat-footed 26); Atk: +16/+16 melee (1d4+5, claws); SA Shapechange, spell-like abilities, spells, weakness; SQ cauldron of life, darkvision 90 ft., enemy of light, familiar (tiny viper snake), hideous, mimicry, telepathy; SR 18; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +6, Concentration +8, Disguise +6, Heal +9, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +11, Move Silently +7, Scry +7, Search +5, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +7, Spot +9; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude.

*Languages:* Tepestani\*, Draconic, Goblin, Sylvan.

*Sorcerer Spells per Day:* 6/7/4. Base DC = 13 + spell level.

*Sorcerer Spells Known:* 0—dancing lights, daze, detect magic, flare, mending, read magic; 1st—charm person, silent image, summon monster I; 2nd—hypnotic pattern.

*Signature Possessions:* Bracelets of armor +3 (as bracers), hag eye, ring of protection +2, shawl of charisma +2 (as cloak), wand of summon monster I.

The sisters Mindefisk can take any form. No shape ever really pleases them, however, for they always see themselves and each other as they truly are: hideous, wretched crones. These hags have twisted backs, sagging, warty skin, pointed noses, sharp black fangs and long curving talons that are as hard as iron. They wear patchwork clothing stolen (or made) from their victims. The three hags were beautiful in their youth, and their current ugliness torments them.

The eldest sister, Leticia, became a sea hag and is the most grotesque of the three. Open sores on her yellow skin ooze white fluid. Her eyes have red irises surrounding large black pupils, and she weeps

yellow-green tears. Her face is distorted by bony protrusions, and she has hair like seaweed. Standing under five feet tall, she is barely half the height of a typical sea hag. Her body seems to have been vertically compressed, lending her the bloated physique of a frog.

The middle sister, Laveeda, became an annis. Standing eight feet tall even with her hunched back, she towers above her sisters. Her shiny mottled skin is as hard as iron and has the blue-black color of bruises. Buggy pouches of flesh dangle from her lanky frame. Her fangs are too large for her mouth, leaving ropy strands of drool to dangle from her gaping maw. Her eyes are small and black, as are her tears.

The youngest sister, Lorinda, became a green hag. She has the pebbly greenish-brown skin of a toad. Her knotted black hair resembles a tangle of vines but is greasy to the touch. Her eyes are large, bright orange and have reptilian slits for pupils. She weeps tears the color of blood.

## Background

The hags' tale begins with Holger and Rudella Mindefisk, a wedded pair of peasant farmers who worked a desolate patch of ground. Rudella was a desperately lonely woman; both her husband and their two sons were gruff and surly and spent most of their time hunting or working the fields. The occasional traveler would spend a night in their barn, but this offered Rudella little respite. When Rudella expressed her desire for daughters, Holger swore that he would quit their wedding bed before adding such "weaklings" to his family.

One night, as the men-folk slept, Rudella knelt by the embers of the cooking fire and ardently prayed to the fairies for daughters, for she believed that the fey had many powers. She repeated her plea for three nights, and something heard her. The next morning, Rudella found three infant daughters in a wicker basket on her doorstep. The girls were sickly at first, and Rudella dedicated herself to their care. As the girls flourished under their adoptive mother's care, Rudella's own health waned, and she died two years later, somehow drained of her vitality. After his wife's death, Holger tried repeatedly to rid himself of the girls, often leaving them in the woods for the wolves. Once, he even tied them in sacks and threw them in the river. The girls always returned, however, and Holger eventually resigned himself to the fact that he would never be rid of them. Holger de-



manded that the sisters clean the house and prepare meals, but otherwise, he and his sons ignored them.

Over time, the girls grew into ravishing young women, each more beautiful than the next. Left to their own devices, they often plotted how they would one day leave their pathetic little farm behind and obtain lives of luxury. What began as daydreams soon twisted into dark desire.

One day, a wealthy traveler spent the night at the Mindefisk farm. The girls saw his purse when he paid their father a gold coin for his hospitality, and they knew their moment had arrived. While Holger and his sons were out working chores, the girls worked together to murder the stranger. Rather than bother with burying the corpse, they cooked it into stew and served it to the unsuspecting menfolk. The plan had been so effective that the girls continued the practice for several years, slowly drawing the attention of the Dark Powers.

Eventually, the girls realized that they would never make enough money this way, so they each came to the independent decision to seduce the next traveler and entice him to take her away to exotic lands. Before long, a roguish dandy came along. He sensed the girls' motives, but he had no intention of taking any of them anywhere. Instead, he merely played to their expectations, enjoying their favors while the girls drove each other mad with jealousy. Ultimately, each girl decided that she would rather kill the man than see one of her sisters leave with him. And so they did. As the Mindefisk sisters murdered the gigolo, the Mists descended on their farm. The girls became hideous hags and the darklords of the new domain of Tepest.

### Current Sketch

The hags are reclusive creatures, better known to the goblins of Tepest than to any human native or traveler. Indeed, the carnivorous goblins that roam Tepest's woods are often blamed for the hags' predations. The hags are responsible for the disappearances of many natives and travelers, for they have become masters of cannibalistic cuisine. The hags use their magic and trickery to lure victims out to their cabin for dinner.

Cautious and capable folk can occasionally bargain with the hags, who are capable of creating



The Three Hags

many exotic magic trinkets and talismans. The hags are unpredictable, however, and even if they choose not to devour their visitor, they often demand strange and bloody payments for their services.

The hags hate youth and beauty above all else and are deeply jealous of anyone in love. They often punish those who possess these traits simply for their own malicious satisfaction. The hags' favorite ploy is to kidnap a pretty young bride, assuming her form to seduce the handsome young husband before slaughtering them both. On the other hand, the hags are delighted by riddles and puzzles. A cornered opponent can keep the hags at bay for hours by entertaining them with clever word games.

### Combat

The three hags share a ravenous appetite, though they eat for pleasure more than for survival. Each hag can devour the body of a Medium-size creature in 10 minutes, using her fangs and talons





to strip flesh from bone. Each of the sisters is a formidable opponent in her own right, but their power increases when they work together.

**Laveeda:**

**Special Qualities:** *Keen Scent (Ex):* Laveeda can smell any humanoid within a half-mile, regardless of wind direction. She can even detect the humanoid's type (e.g., human, elf, goblinoid, etc.), though, otherwise, this ability is similar to the scent special quality. If Laveeda has detected a particular individual before, she automatically recognizes its personal scent.

**Leticia:**

**Special Attacks:** *Evil Eye (Su):* Leticia's evil eye has a 75% chance of killing her opponent instantly. The save DC to resist Leticia's evil eye ability is 19.

*Horrific Appearance (Su):* The save DC to resist Leticia's horrific appearance ability is 21.

**Lorinda:**

**Special Attacks:** *Weakness (Su):* The save DC to resist Lorinda's weakness ability is 19.

**Abilities Common to All Three Hags:**

*Cauldron of Life (Su):* If a hag is slain, either of her surviving sisters can restore her to life by retrieving the corpse, placing it in the large iron cauldron they keep near their cottage and boiling the body in a special mixture of loathsome ingredients for 24 full hours. If the process is uninterrupted, the slain hag emerges alive and well from the bubbling slime.

*The Covey:* The save DC for the sisters' covey spell-like abilities is 20 + spell level. The sisters can use these abilities regardless of their distance from one another.

*Enemy of Light (Ex):* The sisters cannot use their shapechange ability in direct sunlight and take 1 point of damage for each full 10 minutes they are exposed to direct sunlight.

*Hideous (Ex):* If any of the sisters looks into a mirror, the mirror instantly cracks beyond repair.

*Mimicry (Ex):* All three sisters possess the mimicry ability common to green hags, though it also extends to the imitating the voices of specific individuals. This ability gives the hags a +4 circum-

stance bonus to Bluff when using their mimicry to deceive allies of the imitated individual. The hags must make a Will save (DC 13 + previous rounds of continuous speaking) each round that they imitate an individual. If a hag fails this save, she cackles uncontrollably in a hideous voice, giving herself away.

*Shapechange (Su):* The sisters can use *shapechange* as a standard action, as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer. The sisters can remain in any form for as long as they desire, shifting between forms or back to their normal form as a standard action.

*Spell-Like Abilities:* At will — *fog cloud*, *ghost sound*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *speak with animals*, *speak with plants*, *tongues*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 13th-level sorcerer. The save DC, where applicable, is 20. These abilities are in addition to any spell-like abilities the sisters already possess as hags.

*Telepathy (Su):* The sisters can communicate with one another telepathically over any distance.

## Lair

The three hags reside in a crude and cramped cottage at the heart of the Tepestani forests. A cauldron is always left bubbling on the hearth fire. The hags have nailed trophies from many of their victims on the walls, including the tanned skins of many types of creatures. The ground outside the hags' cottage is littered with gnawed and broken humanoid bones (both human and goblin). The cabin is usually a rank 3 sinkhole of evil, but when the covey gathers to perform powerful rituals, the rank can occasionally rise to 4.

## Closing the Borders

When the hags wish to seal their domain, a fierce storm whips up at Tepest's borders. The winds cause all creatures of all sizes to be blown away (no saving throw), rolling or blowing them back into Tepest (see Table 3-17 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Creatures that manage to somehow stand up to the winds are usually incinerated by endless strokes of lightning or battered to death with hail.





## **B**aron Urik von Kharkov, Darklord of Valachan

**Male human mature nosferatu vampire Ftr11:**  
CR 14; SZ M Undead (6 ft. tall); HD 11d12; hp 87; Init +8; Spd 40; AC 23 (touch 15, flat-footed 19); Atk: +16/+16 melee (1d4+5, claws) or +16/+13/+6 melee (1d8+7, +1 longsword), +15 melee (1d6+7, +1 short sword) or +18/+13/+8 ranged (1d8+5, +1 mighty (Str 16) composite longbow); SA Blackout, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, domination; SQ Alternate form, cold and electricity resistance 20, damage reduction 20/+1, darkvision 60 ft., daylight powerlessness, gaseous form, lunar regeneration, restful sleep, spider climb, turn resistance +6, undead, vampire weaknesses; SR 13; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 19, Con —, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 19.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +8, Bluff +12, Climb +12, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +11, Hide +12, Intimidate +8, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Ride +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +9, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +8; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

**Languages:** Vaasi\*, Draconic, Mordentish, Sithican.

**Signature Possessions:** +1 longsword, +1 short sword, +1 mighty (Str 16) composite longbow, +1 arrows, bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1.

Urik von Kharkov is a tall, exotically handsome black-skinned man. He has broad shoulders, is quite muscular and speaks in a deep, resonant baritone. Urik has high cheekbones and an angular jaw. His hair is short, black and straight, and he always keeps it meticulously groomed. His compelling eyes have an unusual golden hue. When angered, his pupils change to the slits of a cat. Von Kharkov's hands are covered in sleek black fur and feature retractable talons, but he hides this deformity with gloves. Despite his build, von Kharkov moves smoothly and gracefully.

### Background

The baron started life as a simple panther roaming the wilds of an outlander world, but his tale begins with the powerful wizard Morphayas. A woman named Selena provoked his wrath by spurning his advances, so the wizard conceived of a twisted and insanely elaborate plot for revenge. Morphayas used a rare and powerful kind of polymorphing magic to transform a panther into a full-grown man capable of higher thought and emotion. Morphayas named his creation Urik von Kharkov and gave him the fictional title of Baron. He arranged to have Urik receive years of educa-

tion and courtly training at the finest schools. At school, Urik exhibited a tendency toward violence and treachery.

When Morphayas felt his creation was properly "finished," he arranged for Urik and Selena to have frequent chance encounters. Morphayas had designed Urik to both appeal and be attracted to Selena, and the pair soon became lovers, just as the wizard had planned. Morphayas waited until the two were locked in a lover's embrace, then dispelled the magic that maintained Urik's humanity. The savage panther tore Selena to shreds.

Morphayas recovered Urik and bestowed human form upon him again, planning to use his assassin again. He did not, however, expect Urik to remember his prior human incarnation. Having never known of his true nature, Urik was horrified by the uncontrollable beast within him. He escaped from the wizard and fled the country, burning with hatred and humiliation. In this state, he stumbled into a bank of fog and emerged in Darkon, where an impoverished bard told him legends of Azalin's vampiric secret police. Urik sought out a vampire to induct him into the ranks. In undeath, Urik sought not just power and immortality, but control over the panther. What he received was 20 years of slavery to a Kargat master.

When his master was killed, Urik fled into the Misty Border. This time, the Dark Powers embraced him, granting him his own domain. Urik von Kharkov adapted well to his new prison. He named it Valachan and declared himself its baron.

### Current Sketch

Some vampires pine for the humanity they have lost. Urik von Kharkov mourns for the humanity he never had. He truly loved Selena, and his role in her murder still haunts him. Von Kharkov has been a panther, a man and a vampire. He possesses traits of all three. He has the quick temper and taunting cruelty of a cat, the intelligence and creativity of a human and the charm and bloodthirst of a nosferatu.

Baron von Kharkov marries frequently. He may select a bride for himself if some beauty catches his eye, but usually, she is selected through a lottery. Valachan's three major settlements take turns sacrificing one of their daughters to the Baron's desires. These weddings are never joyous occasions, for few of the Baron's brides survive their first year of marriage. Baron von Kharkov tries to be the perfect gentleman, but he cannot







deny his true nature. He inevitably begins to question his every word and deed, wondering when his civilized veneer will crack. Within months, he grows suspicious of his bride. He becomes convinced that she must already know he is a beast and that she must be keeping other secrets from him. His behavior toward her turns cold, then cruel. Finally, he snaps and tears the woman apart. After a period of shame and self-recrimination, he calls for another lottery. His behavior is always the same, regardless of his bride's manner.

## Combat

Von Kharkov is a dangerous opponent in close combat, even during daylight hours. He always uses his physical prowess to its utmost advantage. If von Kharkov requires reinforcements, nearly half the population of Valachan lives under his domination, and he can telepathically call upon all of these victims if need be. (Of course, many would take days to travel to his location.) Von Kharkov is deeply mistrustful of spellcasters, particularly wiz-

ards. He always targets arcane spellcasters among his foes first, then turns on divine spellcasters before mopping up whatever opponents remain.

**Special Attacks:** *Blackout (Su)*: If von Kharkov successfully uses his drain blood ability on a creature, that creature immediately suffers a blackout when it escapes the Baron's grapple. The creature forgets all that occurred in the five minutes leading up to and including von Kharkov draining it, as if the spell *modify memory* had been used on it. This ability is a mind-affecting compulsion enchantment.

*Children of the Night (Su)*: Unlike most vampires, von Kharkov can only use this ability to summon 2d4 black panthers (use the leopard in the *Monster Manual*).

*Claws (Ex)*: Unlike most vampires, von Kharkov has claw attacks instead of a slam attack.

*Domination (Su)*: When used like a gaze attack, this ability works just like that of the *Monster Manual* vampire. However, victims of von Kharkov's blood drain attack must also make a Will save or fall instantly under his influence. In this case, the victim remains under the von Kharkov's domination until the victim receives a *break enchantment* spell or Urik is slain.

*Vampire Abilities*: The save DC against von Kharkov's vampire abilities is 18.

**Special Qualities:** *Alternate Form (Su)*: Unlike most vampires, von Kharkov cannot assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, wolf or dire wolf. Instead, he can only take the form of a black panther (as the leopard in the *Monster Manual*). This ability is otherwise unchanged.

*Daylight Powerlessness (Ex)*: Von Kharkov cannot use any of his supernatural attacks or qualities in the hours between sunrise and sunset. If he is actually exposed to direct sunlight, he must sleep in his coffin for 8 full hours to regain his powers. He can continue to exert influence over previously dominated victims during the day, but he cannot dominate new victims. If von Kharkov is caught in his panther form at daybreak, he is trapped in that shape until he regains its powers.

*Lunar Regeneration (Su)*: Von Kharkov gains the regeneration special quality whenever he is exposed to direct moonlight. When he is exposed to moonlight, any damage he has previously suffered is immediately converted to subdual damage;



this is true even if von Kharkov had already been slain. He then automatically heals subdual damage at a rate determined by the phase of the moon: crescent moon 3 hp/round, half moon 4 hp/round, gibbous moon 6 hp/round, full moon 8 hp/round. Fire, acid and *blessed* or holy weapons still deal normal damage. Von Kharkov can reattach severed limbs while regenerating, but he cannot regrow them. If decapitated, von Kharkov cannot heal subdual damage until his head is reattached.

*Restful Sleep (Ex)*: So long as he has at least 1 hit point, von Kharkov heals 11 hit point per hour he sleeps in his coffin, just as if he had rested for a full day.

*Vampire Weaknesses*: Garlic and mirrors do not affect von Kharkov. He may freely enter any building in Valachan without being invited. He can cross running water at will, but he still suffers damage if immersed. Wooden stakes are useless against him — his heart must be impaled on a stake made of sharpened bone.

## Cair

Baron von Kharkov resides in Castle Pantara, which rests on a cliff overlooking the road between Rotwold and Habelnik. From some angles, the castle resembles a great cat, crouched and ready to pounce. The castle is home to the baron, his handful of spawn and at least a score of living peasants. These peasants frequently succumb to White Fever and are sent home to be exchanged for healthy replacements. Castle Pantara is usually a rank 2 or 3 sinkhole of evil. This level often rises by a rank in the weeks following the death of von Kharkov's latest bride.



## Gasan the Mad, Darklord of Vechor

**Male Fiendish wood elf Wiz13**: CR 16; M Magical Humanoid (4 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 13d4-13; hp 36; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 20 (touch 16, flat-footed 16); Atk: +7/+2 (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +11/+6 ranged (masterwork dart); SA Reality dominion, smite good, spells; SQ Arcane mastery, cold and fire resistance 20, damage reduction 10/+3, darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, elven traits, familiar (raven), regeneration 5; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 7. Height *Skills and Feats*: Alchemy +16, Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +2, Scry +16, Search +7, Spellcraft +17, Spot +2.; Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Forge Ring, Heighten Spell, Scribe Scroll.

## Closing the Borders

When von Kharkov wishes to seal his domain, the land itself subtly shifts to redirect travelers back into Valachan. Regardless of their bearing, travelers always become confused in the forest and find themselves journeying back into the domain.

## Shallow feeding and White fever

As detailed in Chapter Five of the *Ravenloft* setting book, vampires must feed every night, typically by inflicting permanent Constitution drain. Given time, a vampire's predation can decimate the population of its feeding grounds. A vampire who wants to preserve its feeding stock or simply keep a low profile can instead rely on "shallow" feeding, inflicting only temporary ability score damage rather than permanent drain. A vampire utilizing shallow feeding must consume twice as many points of the applicable ability score each night to slake its thirst, however. The typical vampire would thus have to inflict 8 points of temporary Constitution damage each night to sustain itself.

The White Fever epidemic in Valachan is actually entirely the result of the widespread shallow feeding of Baron von Kharkov and his handful of nosferatu spawn. Von Kharkov prefers to take just a single point of Constitution from eight separate victims each night.

*Languages*: Vechorite\*, Abyssal, Darkonese, Elven.

*Wizard Spells per Day*: 4/6/5/5/5/4/2/1. Base DC = 15 + spell level.

*Spellbook*: 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*change self, color spray, enlarge, grease, obscuring mist, silent image, sleep, summon monster I, unseen servant*; 2nd—*darkness, fog cloud, glitterdust, hypnotic pattern, minor image, shatter, summon monster II, summon swarm, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*blink, fly, gust of wind, major image, sleet storm, slow, suggestion, summon monster III*; 4th—*confusion, emotion, Evard's black tentacles, hallucinatory terrain, polymorph other, shadow conjuration, summon monster IV*; 5th—*dream, feeblemind, mirage arcana, nightmare, summon monster V, teleport*; 6th—*acid fog, control weather, mass suggestion, permanent image, summon monster VI*; 7th—*insanity, reverse gravity, summon monster VII*.





*Signature Possessions: +1 dagger, masterwork darts, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +3, cloak of resistance +2, headband of intellect +2, ring of protection +2, wand of summon monster III.*

Easan is a wood elf with coppery red hair and a smooth olive complexion. He shows no overt signs of his fiendish soul, but he has a stunted body, standing barely four feet tall and weighing just over 90 pounds. His dark eyes often gleam with hints of his malevolent imaginings. Easan speaks in a soft, melodic voice, though his comments often slip into gibberish.

Easan's attire is set by the occasion. He often wears the green and brown leathers of a wilderness scout. When addressing his citizens, he dons a black toga topped by a wreath of dead laurel leaves. When working on his eldritch projects, he prefers a basic laboratory smock smeared with grisly stains.

## Background

Easan was originally a wizard in a small kingdom of wood elves on an outlander world. A human tyrant rose to power in a neighboring land and started to build his kingdom. Easan investigated the tyrant and discovered that this "human" was actually a powerful entity, perhaps even the son of an evil god, and that he commanded a legion of fiends.

Shocked, Easan brought his evidence to the leaders of his nation. He warned them that the tyrant poses a far greater threat than had been believed and beseeched them to prepare their nation against future hostility. Perhaps, he advised, the elves should even strike against the tyrant before he could fully establish his regime.

Easan's arguments were convincing, and the wood elves prepared for war against their neighbor. Through his spies, the tyrant learned of Easan's meddling and decided to place the interloper on trial. The tyrant's minions captured Easan and dragged him to the tyrant's capital. The tyrant accused Easan of warmongering. Easan claimed, in turn, that the tyrant held that belief only because his infernal mind was incapable of nobler concepts, such as protecting peace or the preservation of life. In closing, Easan claimed that the tyrant could not understand the elven mind — or that of any mortal, for that matter.

To Easan's surprise, the tyrant agreed and expressed a desire to learn. Before Easan could react, the tyrant placed a demon's spirit into Easan. Just as the demon spirit would eavesdrop on Easan's elven soul, the tyrant would telepathically observe the fiend. Sharing a single body and a single set senses, Easan's elven and abyssal souls started to merge. Unable to

distinguish his own thoughts from those of the demon, Easan's mind soon began to crumble.

Easan first tried arcane methods of ejecting the fiend's spirit from his body. When those failed, he turned to the divine magic of the elven clerics. This too proved fruitless. With his sanity hanging by a thread, Easan at last left his elven homeland to travel to the distant island of Vechor, home to an ancient society of mystics and monks. Using elaborate techniques now lost, the mystics succeeded in keeping Easan's demonic soul suppressed for decades.

During that time, the tyrant had thoroughly established a lasting empire. His immediate foes now crushed, the tyrant turned his attention back to the little interloper Easan. The tyrant discovered that Easan had obtained a sense of peace. Infuriated, the tyrant called a magic cataclysm down on Vechor, destroying the island. Easan was the sole survivor, spared to continue his suffering.

With the fiendish spirit suddenly flooding his thoughts again, Easan fled far from civilization. He built himself a sprawling manor, its architecture dictated as much by the fiend as by the elf, and he turned to science in one last, desperate bid to cleanse his soul.

Within his secluded manor, Easan engaged in experiments to isolate and analyze the nature of the immortal soul. He sought to remove the soul from living creatures, swap or split souls or transplant living souls into inanimate objects. His mind now thoroughly merged with that of the fiendish spirit, Easan subjected any creature he could capture to his hideous experimentation. In time, the Mists arrived to draw Easan into the Realm of Dread.

When Easan finally turned away from his experiments long enough to notice the change, he discovered himself in a new land. Soon, he discovered that he was the ultimate master here, able even to force the heavens above to bend to his whim. The traits and customs of the local folk reminded him of the mystics of Vechor, so he named his new land after the destroyed island.

## Current Sketch

Easan's dueling spirits have driven him utterly insane. He continues his experiments into the immortal soul, freely mixing science and magic, but he no longer remembers or truly cares why he started the work. He now invents or discards new rationales for his endless toil almost daily. Easan sees all other creatures as potential experiments, when he is at his most lucid, or as figments of his imagination, when his mind grows foggier.

Easan occasionally grows bored with his experiments. When this happens, he entertains himself by





reshaping some aspect of his domain, such as changing the color of the sun, for example, or bidding Vechor's rivers to flow uphill.

## Combat

Easan is an erratic combatant, veering between a relentless onslaught of spells to destroy opponents outright to more calculating tactics to capture foes for future experimentation. Effectively immortal, he has little to fear from his foes.

**Special Attacks:** *Reality Dominion (Su)*: Easan can reshape objects in his domain at will, though these changes occur too slowly for Easan to use them offensively. Easan can animate any object or plant in his domain as a standard action at will. This effect is similar to the *animate objects* and *liveoak* spells as if cast by a 13th-level sorcerer.

**Special Qualities:** *Arcane Mastery (Ex)*: Easan does not prepare spells as most wizards do, but, instead, readies them as a sorcerer. He no longer needs a spellbook to ready any of his spells. He still casts spells and has the spells per day as a wizard, and Intelligence is still his spellcasting ability score.

*Detect Thoughts (Su)*: Easan can sense the surface thoughts of every creature in Vechor, as if he had studied them for three rounds with *detect thoughts*. There is no save to resist this ability, which requires no concentration or action on Easan's part.

*Regeneration (Ex)*: Nothing deals normal damage to Easan, even starvation, thirst or suffocation. He can be rendered unconscious by subdual damage, but he is immune to a coup de grace. He can regrow limbs without reattaching them and can even regenerate from disintegration, which deals enough subdual damage to render him "unconscious" for one week before his regeneration takes effect again. Whenever Easan suffers permanent ability drain, it is instead treated as temporary ability damage.

## Cair

Easan dwells in a sprawling and elegant manor house at the foot of the Cliffs of Vesanis, though he occasionally visits the palace he willed into existence at the heart of Abdok. The manor is constructed of pink and white marble, and its strange spires seem to catch and scatter the sunlight that strikes them. The estate is surrounded with beautiful gardens, home to numerous monstrous plant creatures of Easan's creation. Inside,



Easan the Mad

the manor contains countless bizarre machines. Easan constructed some of these for his experiments, while others are lethal traps. The manor is usually a rank 2 sinkhole of evil, but this can rise to 3 or even 4 when Easan is experimenting on living subjects.

## Closing the Borders

Creatures that attempt to leave Vechor when its borders are closed are assaulted by a cacophony of horrible, mad laughter. Neither plugging one's ears or magical *silence* will protect one from the laughter. Even deaf creatures can hear the laughter, so long as they have a mind to assail. The din is so unbearable that creatures are considered deafened for as long as they remain outside of Vechor. Creatures exposed to the laughter, even those normally immune to mind-affecting or sonic effects suffer 1d2 points of temporary Wisdom damage each round. Creatures that cross the border back into Vechor find that the laughter quickly dies, and the Wisdom damage can be recovered as normal.





## Alfred Timothy, Darklord of Verbrek

**Male human werewolf** Clr7: CR 10; SZ M Shapechanger (5 ft. 4 in. tall in human or hybrid form, 5 feet long in wolf form); HD 7d8+14; hp 55; Init +5; Spd 30 (50 as wolf or hybrid); AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk: +8 melee (1d6+1, bite); SA Alternate form, rebuke undead, spells, spontaneous casting, plus curse of lycanthropy, trip as wolf or hybrid; SQ Chemical bane, darkvision 60 ft., the hunger, low-light vision, shadow walk, wolf empathy, plus damage reduction 15/silver, scent as wolf or hybrid; SR 16; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +11 (Fort +10, Ref +6 as wolf or hybrid, Will +10 as wolf); Str 10, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 14 (Str 12, Dex 17, Con 18 as wolf or hybrid).

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +7 (+9 as wolf or hybrid), Diplomacy +6, Heal +9, Hide +1 (+4 as wolf or hybrid), Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +8 (+17 as wolf or hybrid), Move Silently +1 (+5 as wolf or hybrid), Scry +6, Search +5 (+9 as wolf or hybrid), Spellcraft +6, Spot +8 (+15 as wolf or hybrid), Wilderness Lore +4 (+8 when tracking by scent in wolf or hybrid form); Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Dodge, Enlarge Spell, Improved Control Shape, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite).

**Languages:** Mordentish\*, Balok.

**Cleric Spells per Day:** 6/6/5/4/3. Base DC = 14 + spell level. Deity: The Wolf God. Domains: Animal (*animal friendship* once/day, Knowledge [nature] is a class skill), Strength (+7 enhancement bonus to Strength for one round once/day).

**Signature Possessions:** *amulet of resistance +1* (as cloak), *wand of cure light wounds*.

In his human form, Alfred is quite non-threatening. Slender and pale, he certainly does not give the impression of evil, at least not until one draws closer. There is almost always a predatory gleam to his eyes, and his toothy smile is reminiscent of a wolf's bared fangs. His body gives of a slight hint of tension, as though he is ready to spring to attack at any moment. In his hybrid or wolf forms, there is no confusing just how threatening he can be. Regardless of his form, Alfred never casts a shadow, and those who notice this might mistake him for a vampire.

### Background

Alfred is the son of Nathan Timothy, a werewolf who was himself a darklord until the Grand Conjunction. Nathan ruled the domain of Arkandale from his paddleboat on the Musarde River, though he was unusually disinterested in his domain. He was equally disinterested in his son, whom he saw as weak and unworthy of his family name.

There was some truth to this. In his human form, Alfred was unusually sickly and frail, and

while his other forms were more powerful, he certainly did not begin to approach his father's might. Alfred began to despise the weakness he felt his humanity represented, and eventually, this hatred expanded to encompass all humanity. He became frustrated by his father's tolerance for the company of humans and his passion for boating, a decidedly human pastime. Disgusted by these perceived weaknesses in his father, Alfred left to seek his own way.

While traveling Arkandale, Alfred became intrigued by some of the practices of the human villagers. The domain of Arkandale was beset by wolves, and the villagers were desperate for relief from their predations. To gain this relief, they made small sacrifices to an ancient deity known only as the Wolf God, hoping to appease it and gain its mercy. Alfred was pleased and amused by the sight of humans denigrating themselves to a being of pure Wolfishness, giving up their hard-earned meat to escape its wrath. He began to identify strongly with this being.

Alfred continued his wanderings, and for the first time in his life, they took him beyond his father's domain. While traveling other domains, Alfred encountered a second human phenomenon that captured his interest: clerics. These individuals, who could call on higher beings to gain incredible powers, inspired Alfred; he would become the first cleric of the Wolf God, and with the powers he gained from it, he would be strong enough to put both human and werewolf in their proper place. He began to pray to the Wolf God, dedicating a portion of every hunt to it and asking for its favor.

Unfortunately, Alfred's devotion to the Wolf God paid no dividends. The animal god seemed to have no interest in granting power to mortal servants. Frustrated and confused, Alfred decided he must be doing something wrong and that human clerics must know some secret to make their gods respond to them. Desperate to learn what he thought they knew, Alfred began hunting down and terrorizing human clerics, torturing them to learn from them all he could. Of course, there was nothing they could tell him; their powers came from simple devotion and nothing more. Not believing them, Alfred killed and devoured each one before moving to the next.

One night, particularly frustrated by another failure, Alfred went on a rampage, slaughtering all of the livestock in his latest victim's village and



desecrating the temple. Drowsy and spent after this carnage, Alfred fell asleep and was easily captured by the angered villagers. They were about to burn him when a pair of Vistani, mother and daughter, approached them and bought Alfred for a large sum. The elder Vistana, gifted with the Sight and well aware of what Alfred's future held in store, offered Alfred his freedom in exchange for his promise to grant safe passage to all Vistani in the future. Alfred agreed, but reneged on his word the moment he was freed, attacking the old woman. The daughter fled, and Alfred slew the *raunie*, whose powerful Sight was unable to predict her own fate. Drawn by this murderous treachery, the Mists soon descended upon Alfred, and he found himself the lord of Verbrek.

### Current Sketch

To his delight, Alfred found that his desire had been granted; he was now a cleric of the Wolf God, able to converse with it and cast spells in its name. Unfortunately, this power came with a potent curse. Whenever Alfred is overcome by passion, be it rage, fear or lust, he immediately shifts to his human form. Nothing he or anyone else does can prevent this change. Alfred does all he can to hide this weakness from others and has been mostly successful to date. Occasionally, however, his control has slipped, and he has been forced to kill the witnesses to his curse.

As the lord of Verbrek, Alfred is the chief and high priest of a large community of werewolves, who do his bidding for the most part. However, werewolves are highly competitive creatures, and Alfred find his authority challenged frequently by powerful males who seek to take his place as head of the pack. Alfred has been able to answer these challenges thanks to his cunning and his clerical powers, but he lives in constant fear of the next challenge. His curse puts him in a precarious position, for if his fellow werewolves learned of it, all of them would turn on him. Because of the curse, he has been forced to abstain from many hunts and has had difficulty keeping a mate, two failings that reduce his status in the eyes of his pack.

Alfred is tormented by his curse, for it prevents him from being the beast he so desperately longs to be. He has come to believe that the only way to overcome the curse is to completely divest himself



Alfred Timothy

of his human form, and he believes the Wolf God can accomplish this for him if he is faithful enough. The Wolf God itself has been silent on this issue, but this silence only reinforces Alfred's belief; he feels it is a test of his faith. Alfred thus drives the pack to greater and greater depravations in the name of the Wolf God, hoping to become worthy enough in its eyes to be freed from the burden of his humanity.

After the Grand Conjunction, Alfred found his domain had increased in size to encompass all of Arkandale, his father's former domain. Alfred saw this boon as a sign of the Wolf God's approval and has become even more vicious in exhorting his werewolves to attack humans. He has learned that his father still lives and continues to travel up and down the rivers of the Core. Alfred would like nothing more than to show his father what true power is, but at the same time, he fears such a confrontation.



## Combat

Alfred would like nothing more than to leap into combat, snarling and slashing and shedding the blood of his foes. Unfortunately, his curse prevents this. He is forced to be calculating and methodical in combat, keeping his emotions under control. Fighting Alfred can be an unusual experience as a result, as the hulking man-wolf fights defensively and seeks tactical advantage rather than simply ripping his foes apart.

**Special Qualities:** *Alternate Form (Su)*: Like most natural lycanthropes, Alfred has the Improved Control Shape feat and, thus, nearly perfect control over his transformations. He is cursed, however, to automatically transform into human form when he is overcome with passionate anger, lust or fear (no check allowed).

*Shadow Walk (Su)*: Whenever the moon is visible, Alfred can use *shadow walk*. This ability functions as the spell except that it only affects Alfred and allows instantaneous movement through the Plane of Shadow to any shadowed area in Verbrek.

## Lair

Alfred sneers at the humans' necessity to surround themselves with walls of stone and considers all of Verbrek to be his lair. He is most frequently encountered at the Circle, a group of large standing stones deep within the forests of the domain. The Circle is the center of werewolf society, where meetings take place and struggles for dominance are fought. No humans are permitted to step foot here, save when they are brought for food or entertainment... concepts often synonymous to the werewolves.

## Closing the Borders

Alfred cannot close his borders through any supernatural means. When he wishes to seal his domain, he sends dire wolves and werewolves to patrol the borders. It is possible to escape Verbrek, provided one can outwit or outrun these vicious predators.



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